

2013

Seventy years of the African American male experience at Eastern Illinois University

Rovion D. Reed

Eastern Illinois University

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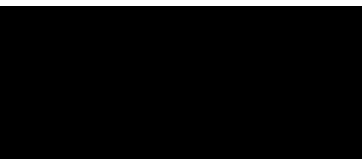
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Seventy Years of the African American Male Experience at

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BY

Rovion D. Reed

THESIS

SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS
FOR THE DEGREE OF

Master of Science in College Student Affairs

IN THE GRADUATE SCHOOL, EASTERN ILLINOIS UNIVERSITY
CHARLESTON, ILLINOIS

2013

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SEVENTY YEARS OF THE AFRICAN AMERICAN EXPERIENCE AT
EASTERN ILLINOIS UNIVERSITY

Rovion D. Reed

Thesis

Department of Counseling & Student Development
Eastern Illinois University
Charleston, IL

May 2013

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supporting me throughout my collegiate career; I would not be where I am now without them.

For the encouragement, laughter, and support I received from family, friends, acquaintances and strangers who served as inspiration through this process; I am grateful to all of you.

DEDICATION

I would like to dedicate this study to the memory of Adrian Baker; a young man who I laughed, fought, and cried with. We both shared an intense passion for the making African American men successful in education and in life. This one is for you AB.

ABSTRACT

Using qualitative methodology the researcher analyzed the lived experiences of seven African American men who attended Eastern Illinois University over the past seven decades including one who is currently enrolled. Data was collected by conducting archival research as well and semi-structured interviews. Overall participants reported having good experiences at Eastern Illinois University. The participants' experiences were categorized into seven themes including faculty or staff relations, peer relations, intra-racial relations, campus involvement, mentoring, campus climate, and Black Greek organizations. In addition, minor themes were also discovered including loneliness, lowered expectations, positive influence of student organizations, and sense of care from mentors.

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CHAPTER I

Introduction

In 1954, the courts unanimously came to the decision that separate educational facilities are inherently unequal (*Brown v. Board of Education*, 1954), effectively bringing to a halt centuries of legal unequal educational practices. In the years following this decision, many state colleges and universities opened up their doors to African American students (Jackson, 2005). Prior to school desegregation, African American males mainly enrolled at historically black colleges and universities (HBCUs) or trade schools (Allen, 1992). Many of these institutions were state funded colleges and universities which granted African American males full enrollment. The late 1950s and 1960s gave birth to the Civil Rights and Black Power Movements and the once placid campuses of the United States were being occupied by intelligent, charismatic, and fearless individuals who not only wanted equal rights for African Americans, but also yearned for the proper treatment of all men (Williams, 2002).

From the turbulent times of the 1960s to today, all ages are impacted by the political and social changes around them. This is particularly true for the African American male student who continues to be less prepared than his counterparts for the rigors of college (e.g. Bahr, 2010; Loury, 2004; Lundy-Wagner, & Gasman, 2011); to experience lower enrollment than White males and African American females (National Center for Educational Statistics (2012); and be subjected to "racist stereotypes and racial microaggressions" (Harper, Davis, Jones, McGowan, Ingram, & Platt, 2011, p. 180).

The African American students of the 1970s held on to the dreams and to the teachings of Newton, Fanon, and Karenga (Harris, 2001). In the 1980s, although still

socially conscious, African American males were introduced to Hip Hop, excessive socialization, and excessive drug use which carried on to the college campus (Scott, 2005). The 1990s welcomed gangster rap as a musical normality, and gang culture became Black culture to those on the outside looking in (Rose, 1994). On the other hand, the millennium inaugurated a different type of African American college student who was politically aware but yet consumed by the media (Cuyjet, 2006).

The prevailing research paints the broad picture of the African American male on college campuses. But, what does this picture look like for campuses which are not only predominantly White but located in a broader White and rural community? Given the geographical location of Eastern Illinois University (EIU) where the broader off-campus community is largely Caucasian with the largest semi-urban center located about forty five miles away, was the African American male student at this campus similarly impacted? What were their experiences over the decades? How have these experiences impacted the student? Guided by an ecological perspective, I believe that it is reasonable to assume that African American male students on the campus of Eastern Illinois University, a mid-sized, university located in the rural Midwest, have been uniquely impacted by the broader social milieu. Based on this assumption, I assert that these experiences are affected by opportunities to socialize with others of similar background, opportunities to interact across racial groups, the campus-community relationship, all important components of the African American student's ecological system (Bronfenbrenner, 1977). It has been widely documented that African Americans who attend HBCUs have more positive experiences than those who attend predominantly White institutions (e.g. Davis, 1998; Fries-Britt & Turner, 2002) that may be explained

by their cultural environment as a source of cultural capital (Davis, 1998). I also hypothesize that though some experiences may improve for the African American male at Eastern over the investigative period, some experiences remain disconcertingly similar.

Purpose

The primary purpose of this study is to utilize interpretive approaches that explore the African American male experience on the campus of Eastern Illinois University over the last seven decades within an ecological systems perspective to gain an understanding of how these experiences were shaped by the broader social and cultural contexts. A secondary purpose is to document the diverse experiences of African American males at Eastern Illinois University as they are told by the students themselves. A final purpose of the study is to determine the impact how these experiences have changed throughout the years. Findings from this study will help shed some light on some of the specific challenges that African American males have endured and may be continuing to endure on this campus. This study will also serve as a window to learn the lived history of Eastern Illinois University pertaining to African American men through the lens of the African American male as well as through the texts of relevant campus media and literature.

Research Question

In order to gain an understanding of the lived experiences of the African American male student at Eastern Illinois University within the broader socio-cultural context, I formulated the following research questions:

1. What were the experiences of African American male students at Eastern Illinois University over the last seven decades?

2. What impacted/influenced those experiences?
3. How did these experiences evolve/change overtime?

Significance of Study

Although much has been written about the African American male experience on college campuses (e.g. Harper, 2012; Patton, 2012) few have explored the experiences of that population on a predominantly White campus located in a White rural community such as EIU (Thompson, 2010; Blount, 2011) and none have explored the African American male experience over time. I am particularly interested in the African American male experience at Eastern Illinois University as an African American male who completed an undergraduate program there and is currently enrolled in graduate school. Secondly, many events have occurred over the past seven decades that have shaped the society and may have had a profound effect on African American male college students, for example, the attacks on the twin towers will forever mar the minds of many who were directly and indirectly impacted by the tragic event. Eisenberg and Silver (2011) wrote "Most of the children and adolescents who lived in the United States during the September 11, 2001, terrorist attacks (9/11) have grown up in the shadow of societal changes that followed or coincide with the reality of terrorism on U.S. soil." (p. 468). Similarly, the African American male has been affected by school segregation, both racial and socioeconomic (Reber, 2010), the Civil Rights and Black Power movements (Wendt, 2007), crack cocaine (Goddard & Nobels, 1989), gentrification (Freeman, 2006), cradle to prison pipeline theory (Chappell, 2008), and the election of the first African American president (Marable & Clarke, 2009). It is safe to assume that

all of these things may have played a role in the collegiate experience of African American male college students over the decades.

The findings presented by this study can be useful in four ways. First, the participants in this study will directly benefit from the positive emotionality that may result from knowing that their voices are important, and that they are contributing towards an important discourse. Secondly, college student affairs professionals can utilize the findings as part of a comprehensive approach to improving the experiences of their students of color. Thirdly, sharing the history of the African American male college student at this institution with new and future students of color can help foster a sense of pride within the African American community at Eastern Illinois University. Fourth, the university as a whole could also benefit from the findings of this study as well. By acknowledging the history of the African American male college student and the African American campus population as a whole the university can have a better appreciation of the plight of the African American male college student on its' campus and determine whether or not it is truly doing all that it can to better the experiences.

Limitations of Study

A number of potential limitations have been identified. Some of these are inherent to the nature of the qualitative approach. One of these, researcher bias, results from my role as the primary instrument. Johnson and Christensen (2010) suggest that "research bias tends to result from selective observation and selective recording of information and also from allowing one's personal views and perspectives to affect how data are interpreted and how the research is conducted"(p. 265). Another limitation was gaining access to my target population which included individuals who had graduated

from the institution more than 65 years ago. This may be problematic for a few reasons; (1) reduction in target population due to death of potential interviewee; (2) the inability to locate because of lack of connection and (3) reduced accuracy in recollection of experiences due to memory failure. An additional limitation was the amount of information participants were willing to disclose. Participants may unintentionally withhold information that may strengthen the study being conducted. These structural limitations impacted the study by compelling me to change the original design of interviewing two individuals from each decade to interviewing only one. This change impacted the trustworthiness of the findings because of an inability to triangulate within the decade. However, this limitation is minimized by the use of archival documents as part of the data collection. Lastly, this study utilized archival documents (photographs, newspaper clippings etc.) as data. This introduced another limitation through a lack of documents available in the university's archives to reinforce statements made by interviewees effectively creating "holes" in the data.

Definitions of Terms

African American. Citizens or residents of the United States who have at least partial ancestry from any of the native populations of Sub-Saharan Africa (Davis, 1998).

Black Greek Organization (BGO). Predominantly college-based social service organizations with combination of foci: the development of African American identity, community uplift, brother-or sisterhood, and social justice (Parks, 2008, p. 386)

Chronosystem. The individual's own developmental life course is seen as embedded in and powerfully shaped by conditions and events occurring during the historical period through which the person lives. A major factor influencing the course

and outcome of human development is the timing of biological and social transitions as they relate to the culturally defined age, role expectations and opportunities occurring throughout the life course (Bronfenbrenner, 1995, p. 624).

Critical Race Theory (CRT). Establishes the fundamental role that "The Law" (1969-1973) (1969-1973) plays in the maintenance of racial hierarchy, and it offers an opportunity to imagine processes that challenge these systems of domination" (Zuberi, 2011, p. 1577)

Ecology of Human Development. This is "the scientific study of the progressive, mutual accommodation, throughout the life span, between a growing human organism and the changing immediate environments in which it lives, as this process is affected by relations obtaining within and between these immediate settings, as well as the larger social contexts, both formal and informal, in which the settings are embedded." (Bronfenbrenner, 1977, p. 514).

Microsystem. One of Bronfenbrenner's systems. It describes "The complex of relations between the developing person and environment in an immediate setting containing that person (e. g. home, school, workplace, etc.). A setting is defined as a place with particular physical features in which the participants engage in particular activities in particular roles (e.g., daughter, parent, teacher, employee, etc.) for particular periods of time. The factors of place, time, physical features, activity, participant, and role constitute the elements of a setting (Bronfenbrenner, 1977, p. 514).

Predominantly White Institution (PWI). Institutions of higher learning in which Whites account for 50% or greater of the student enrollment (Lomotey, 2010, p. 523).

Content Summary

Chapter I contains a detailed introduction to the present study. An outline of what the reader will encounter in great depth has been covered in the chapter. Chapter II is composed of reviews of literature that reveals changes in African American male's experiences at Eastern Illinois University. Chapter III contains the methodology that was used in the current qualitative study. Chapter IV contains lived experiences of seven African American men who are past and present students of Eastern Illinois University, and who represent the seven decades that are being studied. Chapter V includes the conclusion to the current study. Limitations and current studies are also a part of Chapter V.

CHAPTER II

Review of the Literature

This chapter presents a review of the literature on the history of the African American male college student experience in the United States in general, and how this evolved within the socio-political environment. I focused on seven decades that encompass the height of African American male involvement on Eastern Illinois University (EIU) campus: the 1950's, 1960s, 1970s, 1980s, 1990s, 2000s and 2010s. This review also presents archival documentation through the use of several school publications to provide the reader with some understanding of what was occurring during these decades in the lives of African American male students at EIU.

The African American College Student: The 50s

The 1950s were filled with great defeats and victories for African Americans in the United States. In 1954 the *Brown v. Board of Education of Topeka Kansas*, the Supreme Court deemed racial segregation in schools to be unconstitutional (Birzer & Ellis, 2006). While this could be considered a victory, there was still a war brewing inside and outside of the schoolhouse walls. In 1955 young Chicagoan Emmett Till was beaten and murdered for allegedly whistling at a White woman while on vacation in Mississippi (Whitfield, 1991). That same year, Rosa Park's non-violent demonstration on a Montgomery city bus motivated the African American community of Montgomery to successfully launch a yearlong boycott (Dierenfield, 2008). On September 24, 1957 in Little Rock, Arkansas nine Black students later known as the "Little Rock Nine" were prohibited from entering Central High School under direct orders from the state's governor, Orval Faubus (Fitzgerald, 2006). Although these events do not encompass the

plight of the African Americans during that period in American history in its entirety, they adequately depicted the times even at EIU.

While all of the aforementioned impacted college-aged African American men, the most crucial of the three was the case of *Brown v. Board of Education of Topeka* Kansas. While this ruling forced primary and secondary schools to desegregate, it wasn't until the case of *Hawkins v. Board of Control* (1956) that colleges and universities were forced to follow suite. Brian Harper writes, "Decided in 1956, The Hawkins case introduced the issue of desegregation among institutions of higher education for the first time..." (2007). Although some of the private institutions never openly denied Blacks, they practiced de facto segregation. According to Cornell Law School's Legal Information Institute (2012), "de facto segregation" was a term used to describe a situation in which legislation did not overtly segregate students by race, but nevertheless school segregation continued." (De Factor Segregation, Overview, .para.1)

With that being said, it is safe to assume that the emergence of African American men on the various campuses around the country caught many of the administrations off guard. It is also safe to assume that during this time there was very few support services and organizations offered on campuses for African American men, be it that African American men never attended these institutions. However, the emergence of student groups and Black Greek Organizations (BGO) on these newly desegregated campuses provided African American students an opportunity to socialize and create a community. Whipple, Baier, and Grady (1991) discuss some of the major differences between Black and White Greek systems. This includes the significant role Black Greek organizations play in providing a social scene for members and nonmembers. White Greek

organizations typically limit participation in their social activities to members, their guests, and members of other White Greek organizations. Therefore it is safe to assume that if there weren't any BGOs at a university that the African American Students who attend that university would miss out on key social experiences at that university.

The African American College Student: The 60s and early 70s

The African American experience on college campuses has changed throughout the years. In the 1970s, there was a renewed concern with capturing the essence of blackness (White, 2012)." Blackness, as defined by Foster (2007), "starts idealistically and normatively from the position that to be Black is to be also fully human and a citizen, that it is not merely the projection of inferiority onto a specific group of people" (p.35). With this being said, it is safe to assume that African American students at predominantly White institutions (PWI's) during the 1960s and 70s had to take their Blackness to new heights in order to withstand the trials and tribulations of racism that occurred on college campuses like Eastern Illinois University.

In addition, Ariza and Berkey (2009) "explored how African American students, who represent only a tiny minority of the student body at most selective liberal arts colleges, cope with life on these campuses and struggle to construct their sense of self" (p.42). Through semi-structured interviews they examined the process of racial identity formation among 20 African American students at a private Mid-western liberal arts college. Their findings revealed factors that impact the formation of racial identity amongst African Americans at a PWI. First, due to being Black, students felt frustrated at times and this made living on predominantly white campus seem like boot camp for

Alpha Phi Omega

Carrying out in goal of providing leadership and service to the University and the community and striving to create a general atmosphere of friendship, Alpha Phi Omega had a very activity filled year. The groups provided lifesaving classes for local Boy Scouts, painted curbs in the Charleston area and conducted tours of the EIU campus for various visiting groups. The street lights on Unclon wer decorated for the Christmas season by these men.

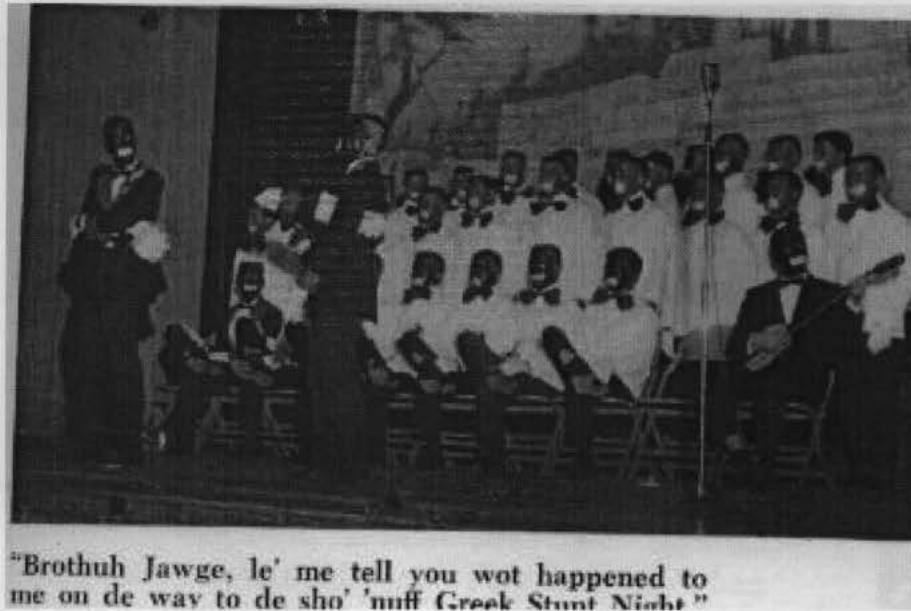
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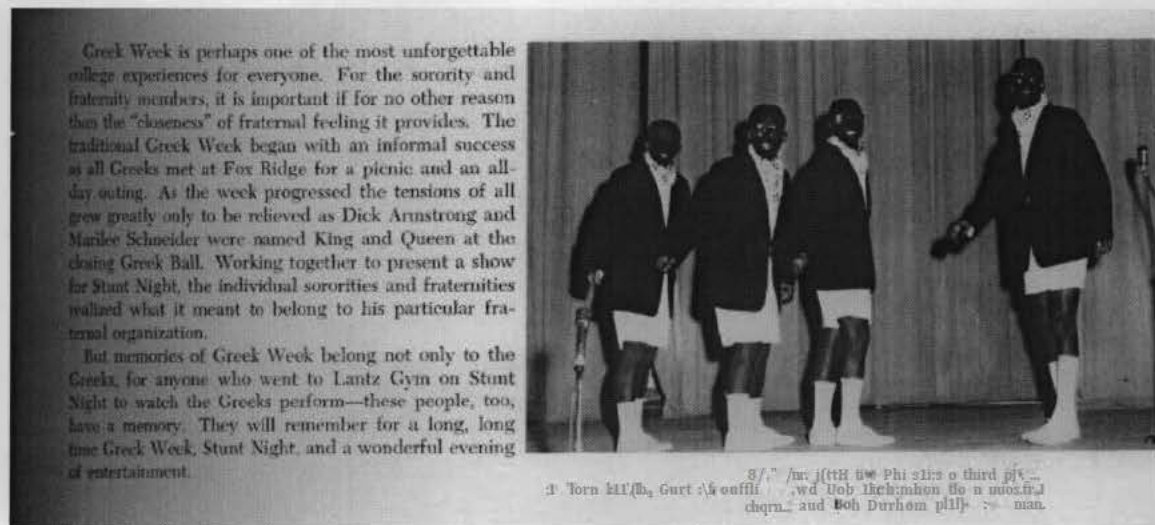


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Figures 1:1. Alpha Ph Omega (1 68). This image shows members of service fraternity, Alpha Phi Omega holding nooses in the Warbler.



Figures 1.2. *Minstrel Show, Warbler (1961)*. This image shows White fraternity performs a blackface minstrel show during Greek Week.



Figures 1.3. *Whites in blackface, Warbler (1963)*. This image shows three white fraternity men performing a minstrel show on the campus of Eastern Illinois University.

life other than the enriching experience they had been promised (p.49). The researchers also indicated that students who had prior experience with interacting with Caucasians

had an easier time adapting to life at the PWI, unlike their peers who didn't have experience interacting with Caucasians (p.49). One of the researchers' participant-s also expressed that prior to coming to the PWI; h di<ln't realize that he was a minority (p.49). Therefore, it is say to assume that even if student were from predominantly African American school and/or communities, that once at a PWI they had to reconstruct the "Blackness".in order to cope. Their results also suggest that students' performances of blackness are dynamic, but primarily reflect the struggle to resist stereotypes and to maintain their racial integrity. The African American men who were entering higher education in the 1960s and 1970s had to face struggles and stereotypes head on (Thompson, 2001).

Out of the need to preserve their cultural back_g_round and to form an alliance with each other,the African American \tudent :it P\\ls and universities began to form organizations (Gerlach, 2008). There have been African American fraternity and sorority organizations in existence since the beginning of the 1900s (Parks, 2008). However, out of those organizations many additional organizations formed, one being the Black Student Union The first Black Student Union was founded at San Francisco State College and is the precursor organization of the Black Campus Movement (Rodgers, 2008). The Black Student Union,just like the Black Panther Party of Self Defenses,; a grassroots organization formed in the 1960s; was lobbying for African Americans on the streets (Lazerow & Williams, 2006), Black Student Unions were lobbying for the rights of African American students on the campus that they inhabited (Rojas, 2007).

The African American College Student: The late 70s and 80s

While the 1960s and 1970s were considered the golden years of the Black Student

Movement, the late 1970s and 1980s ushered the Black Greek Letter Organizations (BGLOs) to the forefront of the African American male social experience on campuses and universities (Kimborough & Hutcheson, 1998). Out of the boroughs of New York City emerged Hip-hop in the later 70s in response to the collapsing of the traditional support systems for African Americans (Rose, 1994 as cited in Petchauer, 2007). Its artistic elements (e.g. deejaying, graffiti) rapidly spread across the nation influencing youth and young adults. Indubitably, this introduction of Hip Hop changed the movement as African American men were either partying to the music, or absorbing knowledge from the more conscious rap lyrics. Mark Stovall (1989), student reporter for Eastern Illinois University's minority newspaper, *Minority Today*, wrote, "Rap songs are asking blacks to use their rights to better the economies in black communities, demand more from politics, and to educate our people on the dangers of being ignorant"(p.7).

Not only did music shape the African American male college experience, but films like *School Daze* (Lee, 1988) gave viewers a precise look at what was occurring in their lives. *School Daze* has a wide array of characters that could possibly represent the African American population at a number of colleges and universities in the 1980s. Its focus is on the social relationships between members of BGLOs and non-members of BGLOs (Wilson-McCormick, 2004) and could possibly serve as a cornerstone of the ideology of BGLOs from the perspective of individuals involved in BGLOs and those who are not.

BGLOs served as safe havens for African American students on college campuses throughout the country during that time and still do today (Ross, 2001). These organizations thrive upon philanthropy not just for African Americans in the community,

but for the community as a whole. BGLOs on the campus of Eastern Illinois University during that time participated in a number of community service activities. In an article entitled "Black Greeks Active", *Minority Today* reporter Terri Leonard (1989) interviewed two African American men who were involved in BGLOs. The two men discussed the various community outreach programs that their organization put on such as "turkey harvest.. and donating to the United Negro College Fund" (p. 1).

A study on a national sample of 1,500 students enrolled in PWI campuses and HBCUs in 1981 and 1983, respectively showed a changing the enrollment of African American males at universities was taking a downward turn during the late 1980s (Davis, 1994). It could be argued that there were many factors that contributed to this issue. For example, proposition 42 was created to "put the student back in student athlete" by enforcing stricter regulations on awarding scholarships to student athletes who were incoming freshmen (Swift, 1994). Prior to proposition 42 there was proposition 48. Proposition 48 required incoming freshman athletes to have a 2.0 grade point average (GPA) and a minimum score of 700 on the Scholastic Aptitude Test (SAT) or 15 on the American College Test (ACT) to be eligible to play (London, 1989). Proposition 48 student athletes who did not meet these requirements were still eligible for scholarship aid however they would just sit out for their freshman year. Conversely, proposition 42 denied student athletes who did not meet these requirements all scholarships that were determined by the university (Johnson & Ashe, 1989).

The African American College Student: The 1990s

In the late 1980s the African American population faced many complications (Jankowski, 1991). The introduction of crack cocaine (Goddard & Nobels, 1989), the

growth of gang violence (Vigil, 2003), and gentrification shaped how African Americans viewed the world and how the world viewed them (Jankowski, 1991). The party focused Hip Hop music of the 1980s transformed into what was termed "gangster rap music. " Gangster rap glorified the horrific lifestyles of gang members, told the sad stories of life in the inner-city and eventually became the cultural norm (Richardson & Scott, 2002).

The glorification of the gangster, inner city lifestyle wasn't just portrayed in music, but infiltrated the film industry as well with films such as John Singleton's *Boyz n the Hood*. *Boyz n the Hood* is a saga of a group of childhood friends growing up in South Central Los Angeles (Singleton, 1991). Singleton gives the viewer an in-depth look at gang culture, the struggle of African American men trying to pursue higher education, and the impact of gang culture on neighborhoods. These were things that some African American men who were coming from inner city communities to colleges and universities were dealing with.

The 90s, although often overshadowed by the negativity of gangster rap and gang violence, brought several events that casted a positive light on African American men. For example, the Million Man March organized by the Nation of Islam leader Louis Farrakhan called for a million African American men to descend on the nation's capital in the spirit of "atonement" and reconciliation" (Persons, 1997). Although this was a national event, it had a huge impact on African American men at Eastern Illinois University. Shaun Gabbidon (2000) wrote, "From the beginning, college students played an important role in organizing the March and were a significant population among those who attended (p. 17). *Daily Eastern News* reporter, Lisa Koenig (1995) writes about the impact of the Million Man March on Eastern African American population in her article,

Million Man Wake up Call. In her article she discusses the influence of the Million Man March on African American male students and how some of the African American students were inspired by the march to organize their own march on campus. This march was organized by Phi Beta Sigma Fraternity Incorporated and was meant to show unity amongst the black men on campus. Koenig writes, "Arnold Pulliam, president of Phi Beta Sigma, said the Million Man March now will be an annual event on Victory's campus "It is something that is needed... Every year we get new black men who need to be showed that we are unified and this is the way to do it" (p. 1).

The African American College Student: The 2000s

In a contemporary setting, African American students have been able to take advantage of many things that were not available to students of the 60s, 70s, 80s, and 90s. Cell phones, Twitter™, Facebook™, and Skype™ have revolutionized the way students communicate and receive news (Watts, 2010). Another thing that African American students of today have that students of the previous decades did not, is an African American president. Barack H. Obama was elected president in 2008. This marked not only an extraordinary event in America; it also instilled pride, hope, and courage in many African Americans (Fuller-Rowell, Burrow, & Ong, 2011). Fuller-Rowell, Burrow, and Ong researched the impact that the 2008 presidential election had on African American college students and how they identified with their race. They focused on a specific time period before, during, and after the elections. Their findings suggest that after the election identity exploration increased considerably among African Americans and that was more pronounced among those with higher levels of racial centrality. The researchers concluded that the election had a long term and short term effect on racial

identity among African American students.

The African American College Student: The 2010s

In the year 2013 racism has taken a different form but still holds the same social weight as it did in 1964. Racism now finds refuge on the World Wide Web. This digital racism comes in many forms. Some may encounter it in the form of jokes from a website (Weaver, 2011); others may come in contact with this while playing their favorite video game on XBOX Live® (Gray, 2012). In the case of Eastern Illinois University, racist remarks found on social media sites sent shock waves through the campus and the surrounding community. In an article entitled *Racism discussion at EIU draws hundreds to Coleman Hall* reporter Samantha Bilharz gave the reader an in-depth look at the event and the town hall meeting that occurred to discuss the race relation issue between the African American students, the university and the community (JG-TC.com, 2013).

After a fight at a local bar, an African American male student was apprehended and taken in to custody. This student's picture was then placed on the local police department's Facebook® page. People who visited the page were able to comment on the picture of the young man. The comments that were left were racially insensitive and stroked a negative chord with African American students who attend the university. From this, the town hall meeting emerged. Bilharz (2013) writes, "Hundreds of Eastern Illinois University students, faculty, staff and community members gathered Wednesday night to discuss matters pertaining to alleged racial discrimination in the Charleston community and on campus." In the meeting there were various things brought up pertaining to the incident. Some of the comments that were placed on the Facebook® were even shared. Bilharz reported on of the students sharing one of the comments that

she read on the page. Bilharz wrote, "One of those comments allegedly said, "Individuals even stated that the residents need to take their community back by sitting on their porches with their shotguns ... " In response, a Caucasian female instructor from EIU ensured the students that she was concerned. She was reported saying, "I'm listening, I believe you, and I will work for change; we can do this together ... What is happening is discrimination and oppression." The president of the university guaranteed that along with city officials a plan will be put in to action to combat the racism on campus and in the community.

The African American Male College Experience

The African American male experience on college campuses has been taunted with structural, cultural and institutional obstacles and challenges. Prior to Brown versus the Board of Education (1954) the United States considered separate schooling as inherently unequal. Blacks experienced a history of legal exclusion from education. For example, in the case *Missouri ex rel. Gaines v. Canada*, 305 U.S. 337 (1938), Lloyd L. Gaines, an African American, sought admission to an all-White law school at the University of Missouri because there were no all-Black serving law schools in existence in the state at the time. Gaines's was denied admission due to his race. This ruling held up in court. Gaines's attorney sought a writ of mandamus to attempt to reverse the ruling that prohibited Gaines's from enrolling at the University of Missouri. In response to this, the state of Missouri offered to pay Gaines's tuition to an out of state law school that accepted African American applicants. In Gaines's defense, Chief Justice Charleston Evans Hughes ruled the university's attempt to send Gaines elsewhere as inadequate to the requirements of the Equal Protection Clause of the Fourteenth Amendment. The state

also insinuated that it would develop a new law school for Blacks at its predominantly Black university, Lincoln University. This too was overruled.

African American men enrolling in the newly desegregated college campuses had to endure racism in many forms (e.g. Ancis, Mohr & Sedlacek, 2011; Cuyjet, 2002; Harper, 2012). Soloranzo, Ceja, and Yosso (2004) examined how racial micro-aggressions; subtle, stunning, often automatic, and non-verbal exchanges which are put downs' of black by black offenders; influence the racial climate on predominantly white campuses. Their participants were 34 African American students (16 males, 18 females) from three elite' predominantly White institutions. They found two trends: racial micro-aggression in the classroom setting; and racial micro aggression outside the classroom setting. Many participants shared that they felt "invisible" in class, and were academically underestimated by professors. Micro-aggressions faced by African American students outside of the classroom took the form of racial discomfort and tension in specific places on campus as well as negative interactions with campus police. Students' use of counter-spaces or "sites where deficit notions of people of color can be challenged and where a positive collegiate racial climate can be established and maintained" (p.70) was also spotlighted in the study. Counter-spaces took the form of African American focused organizations/student groups and services on campus. The researchers concluded that inequality and discrimination still exist on college campuses and that the students who have to endure these micro-aggressions have to be strong in order to survive.

African American men are very diverse; however the diversity fails to be seen by many of their Caucasian peers. Harper and Nichols (2008) examine the topic of racial

heterogeneity. They argue that the idea that all Black men are alike is a misconception, and suggested that there are many within-group factors (e.g. socioeconomic status, familial background, and geographic community's origin) that go unaccounted for when discussing African American males. The participants themselves held stereotypes about their peers based upon the activities and organizations they participated in. For example, some of them shared that members of Black Greek Organizations were "elitist and arrogant" (p.8). The competition for popularity that occurs among African American male students was also revealed through this research. Although the researchers point out that popularity for African American men is found in their membership in organizations, they also uncovered that there is competition within those groups of organizations. This competition is found mostly among Black Greek-letter fraternities. The researcher concluded that their findings proves that African American male students are not the same and that efforts should be made by these students to learn from their differences and by educators to create a space for them to learn.

While my research focuses on African American men who attend or attended a midsized PWI in the rural Midwest, it is safe to assume that African Americans throughout the country face similar issue. In the report, "Black Male Student Success in Higher Education", Harper (2012) provides an anti-deficit view of Black male college achievement by interviewing high achieving African American males. As part of his findings he describes the "onlyness" phenomenon where participants "had been in classrooms where they were the only Black student" (p.13). Students who experience onlyness had to endure being picked last for group projects and low expectations from instructor and peers. Harper also elaborates that some of the participants had to endure

being racially stereotyped. For example, many of the students, although not a member of any sports teams were continuously mistaken as athletes by their Caucasian peers. While this wasn't a negative thing per say, it solidified that the non-black student population at the institutions were blind to the individualism possessed by African American men. To combat the racism at their university some Harper's participants resorted to either informing or embarrassing their White peers instead of responding with anger. Harper concluded that universities should provide African American men with an outlet to express their concerns with the racial climate of the institution in addition to faculty and staff who are responsibility for speaking out against institutional practices and norms that perpetuate racial inequities.

Theoretical and Conceptual Framework

This study was guided by two conceptual/theoretical frameworks: Bronfenbrenner's (1975, 1976, 1977) Ecological Systems Theory and Critical Race Theory.

Ecological Systems Theory. This study was uses by Bronfenbrenner's Ecological System Theory (1975, 1977) to better understand the lived experiences of African American males who attend/attended Eastern Illinois University. In this theory, Bronfenbrenner posits that human development is nested within a number of systems that are defined by the level of interaction that the individual has with it. Five systems are described. The smallest system and the one closest to the individual is the *microsystem*. The microsystem is "the complex of relations between the developing person and environment in an immediate setting containing that person (e.g., home, school, workplace, etc.) (Bronfenbrenner, Toward an experimental ecology of human

development, 1977); One level outside of this, is the *mesosystem* which "comprises the interrelations / among major settings containing the developing person at a particular point in his or her life." Bronfenbrenner (1977) explained that this would be different for different people and can vary by country and/or society. So, for an American 12-year-old, this would include "interactions among family, school, and peer group" (p.515) for others it may also "include church, camp, or workplace" (p.515). An *exosystem* which extends the mesosystem was described as "embracing other specific social structures, both formal and informal, that do not themselves contain the developing person but impinge upon or encompass the immediate settings in which that person is found, and thereby influence, delimit, or even determine what goes on there... include the major institutions of the society;..."(p.515). The forth system is the macrosystem which is the overarching institutional patterns of the culture or subculture, such as the economic, social, educational, legal, and political systems, of which micro-, meso-, and exosystems are the concrete manifestations. Macrosystems are conceived and examined not only in structural terms but as carriers of information and ideology that, both explicitly and implicitly, endow meaning and motivation to particular agencies; social networks, roles, activities, and their interrelations (Bronfenbrenner, Toward an experimental ecology of human development, 1977, P- 515)

Bronfenbrenner (1986) later added the chronosystem which adds a time and historical component to viewing human development or human functioning. This study drew from these concepts while trying to understand and explain the African American male experience.

Critical Race Theory (CRT). Critical Race Theory is a popular theory of choice

in qualitative research in general (e.g. Delgado, & Stefancic, 1993; Tate, 1997) and in research involving African American educational experiences in particular (e.g. Yosso, Smith, Ceja, & Solorzano, 2009). According to Tucku Zuberi (2011), "CRT establishes the fundamental role that "The Law" (1969-1973) (1969-1973) plays in the maintenance of racial hierarchy, and it offers an opportunity to imagine processes that challenge these systems of domination" (p. 1577). Since the study isn't focused on "The Law" (1969-1973) (1969-1973) per se, one must be aware of CRT's ability to transfer to different arenas. Solorzano and Vilalpando (1998) define it as, "a framework or set of basic insights, perspectives, methods, and pedagogy that seeks to identify, analyze, and transform those structural and cultural aspects of higher education that maintain the marginal position and subordination of Student of Color." CRT is very relevant to this research because through this theory one can determine the effect that the White power structure (Eastern Illinois University) had/has on the collegiate experience of African American men and how those African American men combated the negativity that is associated with such a power structure.

In order to understand how former African American male student fought against oppression archival research will be conducted. Archival research will reveal how African American men on this campus through involvement in registered student organizations, involvement in protest utilized the concept of marginalization to deal with hardships presented by attending a predominantly white university. Since this study will be historically based utilizing archived documents will give this study context, see differently any patterns of behavior that is visible in current data, and perceive relationships of ideas or events that assumed to be unconnected (Glesne, 2011).

Summary

The review of the literature revealed the historical struggles of the African American male on college campuses in the United States. It has also revealed how the broader sociopolitical and cultural milieu (Civil Rights movement, Hip-hop culture, popular media etc.) impacted the experiences of that population, and how although the African American male experience has come a long way, the remnants of past practices continues to be felt today. The African American male experience is shaped by the type of history of the institution that he attends, receiving greater benefits from institutions that were created historically to cater to his needs. Additionally, the literature has revealed some occurrences of the African American male college student at Eastern Illinois University modern day experiences with racial tensions. All of the aforementioned are components that have shaped the collegiate experience of African American males in the country for decades.

CHAPTER III

Methods

This chapter will describe the details of how the study was conducted. By providing the reader with a detailed outline of how the study was conducted, one should be able to replicate this exact study.

Study Design

In this study I explored the experiences of the African American male student at Eastern Illinois University over seven decades: the 1950s, 1960s, 1970s, 1980s, 1990s, 2000s and 2010s. I wanted to gain a deep understanding of these experiences by applying phenomenological approach to the voices of the informants. I also wanted to gain some understanding of the historical context as captured within the printed text of the campus newspaper and yearbook (The Warbler). This goal of seeking meaning, and understanding the context within which those meanings were forged, can be best captured by qualitative inquiry (Maxwell, 2005). Sofaer (1999) writes,

Qualitative methods provide the researcher with rich descriptions of phenomena; enhance understanding of the context of an event and the event itself. Qualitative methods also help to identify patterns and configurations among variables to make distinctions. Qualitative research not only serves the desire to describe; it also helps move inquiry toward more meaningful explanations (p.1102).

Therefore unlike the philosophical assumptions of quantitative approaches, the researcher was not motivated to attaining objectivity (Maxwell, 2012). Instead, the researcher declares that all knowledge is contextual. Knowledge is produced by "(i) participants' own understandings; (ii) researchers' interpretations; (iii) cultural meaning

systems which inform both participants' and researchers' understandings; and (iv) acts of judging particular interpretations as valid by scientific communities" (Pidgeon & Henwood, 1997, p.250). The aforementioned all have relevance displaying context as a network of mutual connections that could construct a more thorough picture (King & Hottocks, 2010). Therefore not seeking objectivity will allow me to bring forth a vivid depiction of the African American male experience.

Participants

Participants were seven African American men who attended Eastern Illinois University, one each in the 50s, 60s, 70s, 80s, 90s, 2000s and one who was enrolled during the time of the interview represented the 2010s. This sample was acquired through criterion sampling. Patton (2002) defined criterion sampling as setting a criteria and picking cases that meets that criteria. I was interested in the experiences of African American males who attend/attended Eastern Illinois University over the past seven decades, therefore the participants had to be an African American male and attend/attended Eastern Illinois University during the decades that are being studied.

A list of African American male students was obtained from the Office of Minority Affairs, and individuals were carefully selected on the recommendations of the office's director. Recommendations were also received from the participants. Participants were contacted by telephone and/or email asking if they would be willing to participate in an interview about their experiences at Eastern Illinois University. Compensation was offered to respondents for their participation in the form of a meal. Each participant signed an informed consent form before proceeding with the interview.

Site

The study was conducted at Eastern Illinois University (EIU or Eastern). Eastern is a mid-size university located in a rural Midwestern town. According to the 2012 census (US Census, 2012), the population of the town is 21,852 including the 11,630 students that attend the university. Caucasians make up 88.7% of the town's population while African Americans make up 7.0%. This is important to note because community influences on a campus are usually the underpinnings of the campus's culture. Enos and Morton (2003) writes, "From the community perspective, campus and community are one domain, and this shared identity gives the community a right to influence ..." It is safe to assume that the culture of the university was not far separated from the culture of the town.

The university offers 47 bachelor degrees and 25 master degrees. The average class size is 23. The student faculty ratio is 17:1. 7,659 White students, 1,580 African American students along with 1,178 other minority students attend Eastern Illinois University (eiu.edu, 2012). I selected this institution because I am a student at this institution and therefore have the most access to it. There were some additional benefits for conducting research in familiar settings. For example, Glesne (2011) explains that when a researcher conducts research in a familiar setting in which they already have an established rapport, the research will more than likely be utilized in the researcher's person and professional life, and it is cost effective.

Researcher Reflection

Although the traditional positivist perspective strives to obtain objectivity, and treats the researcher' background and identity as bias "whose influence needs to be eliminated" (Maxwell, 2013, pA4), qualitative researchers recognize that "the researcher is the instrument" (p.45). I subscribe to this philosophy. As such the following is an account of why I chose to conduct this study.

As an African American male who attends Eastern Illinois University I have had only a few racist occurrences. Two of those experiences occurred in the classroom and in the presence of university and city police. The incident that occurred in the classroom involved an older Caucasian male instructor. For example, on the first day of class while going through the student roll, he would make racist statements about some of the names. The names that appeared to belong to students of Hispanic origin were followed by inappropriate dialogue pertaining to Mexican immigrants and Hispanic yard workers. I also recall that instructor calling the name of one of my peers whose name was **1111**

His name was followed by a comment that insisted he knew the student was going to be an African American.

On several occasions I found myself being followed by university and Charleston police while I was driving. I would purposely make turns in my vehicle to see if the officers were following me. On the occasions where I was stopped, police would question me about my previous whereabouts and other incidents that involved African American students, without acknowledging why I was stopped. A number of my peers and I occasionally share stories about the harassment that occurs at the hands of the university and Charleston police toward Black men.

These are only two examples of racism that I had to endure as a student at Eastern Illinois University. Although one may assume that I reacted negatively to the racism I encountered, I didn't. All the incidents of racism I faced made me upset, nevertheless, I remained collected. I would find myself saying, "...this is just the way it is and this is something that I will have to deal with until the day I die". However, in response to my experiences with racism I find Eastern in empowering younger African American men for I know they too will have to face situations similar to mine.

I have a background in African American studies and history. My passion for African American culture and the history of African American people has been one of the driving forces in my journey to uncover the plight of African American men at Eastern Illinois University. While I am fascinated by the evolution of African American men at EIU, I am more concerned about the future of this demographic at this institution. By providing the African American men who attend and plan on attending this university with a history of the African American male experience, I hope they will find pride in being Black men at Eastern Illinois University. I would also hope that the accounts of how African American men overcame adversities at Eastern will serve as a well of encouragement for them.

Procedure

Semi-Structured Interviews. I conducted individual interviews with the seven participants in the study. Because the participants lived in various locations around the state of Illinois, the researcher had to carry out the interviews at locations that were convenient for the participants. The three locations that interviews took place were: Booth Library located on the campus of Eastern Illinois University, The Office of

Minority Affairs on the campus of Eastern Illinois University, Danville Public Library located in Danville, Illinois, Illinois National guard Armory located in Urbana, Illinois, and Acorn Public Library District in Oak Forest, Illinois.

The interviews conducted on the campus of Eastern Illinois University were performed in a study room in the Booth Library and in the Director of Minority Affairs office in the basement of Thomas Hall, a residential hall on campus. The study room was selected as a location to interview due to the low traffic and low noise of the area in which it is located. The Director of Minority Affairs office in Thomas Hall was selected as a location to conduct interviews because of its proximity to the meeting place of a minority male mentoring group on campus. One of the participants is a member of the group and the interview was conducted after the group's meeting.

The second location selected by the researcher to conduct interviews is the Danville Public Library in Danville, Illinois. According to Google Maps®, Danville, Illinois is 65.2 miles away from the campus of Eastern Illinois University. According to USACITYLINK®, the population of Danville is 33,904, with 25.5% of its population being comprised of Black or African American individuals. The interview took place in the conference room on the second floor of the building. This location was selected because one of the selected participants resides in Danville, Illinois.

The third location selected by the researcher to conduct interviews was Acorn Public Library District in Oak Forest, Illinois. According to Infoplease.com, Oak Forest, Illinois has a population of 28,051, with Black or African American population being 3.6%. The interview will be conducted on the lower level of the library in a group study room. This area was selected due to its size and because it is a low traffic, low noise

area. This location was select .because it was a central location where participants who lived in the Chicago-Land area could easily locate.

The fourth location that was selected by the researcher to conduct interviews is the Illinois National Guard Armory located in Urbana, Illinois. This location was selected because one o fthe participants is an Administrator and Officer at the armory, The interview took place in the office o fthe participant which is located on the first floor of the building and was conducted after regular business hours to ensure low noise and no interruptions.

For the Danville, Illinois and Oak Forest interview locations, the researcher had to schedule the meeting rooms a week prior to the interviews. Since the interviews were videotaped I sought out locations with good lighting and minimal traffic. For those participants who were unclear about the location of the interview sites, driving directions were emailed to them which were acquired from Google Maps®. Once the participants were seated, I introduced myself, stated the study's purpose and what was required of the participants. I then asked if the participant had any questions. After the questions were answered, I allowed the participants to sign the release form and taping then proceeded.

Archival Documents. "To understand a phenomenon, you need to know its history (Glesne, 2011, p. 85). One way of achieving this is to examine actual historical accounts as presented in written documents. I chose to collect data via archival research for a number of reasons. I was interested in the history of the African American male college student on the campus of Eastern Illinois University. In order to get an accurate depiction of the history information had to be pull from the university's archives. By searching the term African American and Black; I was only successful in finding articles

from the late 1970's and beyond. By conducting a search of the word "Negro" in the university's online library database I was able to access the institutions news publications prior to the late 1970s that included African American men. Newspaper articles beginning in 1994 to the present day are available online. I also examined the university's year book to get a sense of the African American male collegiate experience at Eastern Illinois University. By examining the institutions year books and newspapers, I was able to uncover a large amount of data about the university's history as it relates to Blacks or African American. The newspapers were accessed via the library online database and microfilm. The microfilm was viewed using an Image Mouse Plus Digital Reader. Images and stories from the institutions year book were scanned using a Canon Dr 2020u Scanner.

Scanned photographs and newspaper articles were then organized by year. They were then placed into subcategories. The subcategories are as followed: Black Greek Organizations, Involvement, Sports, Campus Climate, and Programming. I then went back and pulled photographs and scanned newspaper articles that were consistent with the year that the participants attended the institution in an attempt to pinpoint the experiences of the participants.

Data Collection

Data was collected by conducting archival research and videotaped semi-structured interviews. According to McClaugland, "archival research means accessing and using original records, created by organizations or individuals and placed under archival control, as sources for intellectual enquiry" (p.308). According Whiting (2008), "semi-structured interviews are: scheduled in advance at a designated time; located

normally outside everyday events; organized around a set of predetermined questions; other questions emerge from dialogue; and they usually last from 30 minutes to several hours". This use of two collection techniques would help in achieving triangulation (Glesne, 2011). Triangulation is the use of data collected from different sources, methods, or researchers (Johnson & Waterfield, 2004, p. 125). Triangulation is important for providing conformation of findings, more comprehensive data, increased validity and enhanced understanding of the studied phenomenon (Bekhet et al., 2012). While there are two types of methodological triangulation I will be using the within method. According to Bekhet et al.(2012), "Within-method studies use two or more data collection procedures, quantitative or qualitative, but not both" (p. 40).

Each individual interview consisted of two general questions created by the researcher. Specific questions were asked to the participants in regards to their respected decades (See Appendix A). The majority of the questions asked were open-ended questions. By using open-ended questions I was able to have a conversation with the participants. I was then able to acquire more information based upon the response given by the participant. After the participants answered all of the questions to the best of their ability the interview was concluded. The researcher then packed up the video recording equipment and exited the interview location.

Data Analysis

Archival Documents. Archival documents serve as source of information in this particular study. When analyzing archival documents the researcher will be looking for what information the document provides and the way that information is presented (Evans, 2009); The newspaper articles were examined for any reoccurring themes and

those themes were recorded to determine if there were any similarities between the accounts that were presented by the participants and the newspaper articles.

Semi-Structured Interviews. Videos of interviews were transcribed within 30 days of the completion of the interview. The trustworthiness of the study was increased by providing copies of the transcripts to the participants for examination of accuracy (Glesne, 2011). Once accuracy was verified, data was prepared for thematic analysis. The constant comparative method described by Glaser (1965), would be applied to gain an understanding of the experiences of African American males. Each decade was examined, and then all transcripts were examined to see if there is a common theme across all decades.

Treatment of Data

The participants' confidentiality was ensured by removing all identified personal information and assigning participants a pseudonym. I also kept consent forms and other documents that could have identifiable information in a secure location; and documented trends only and not specific information about participants. Only upon the consent of the participant will the video footage from the interviews be viewed by the public. If participants are not comfortable with the public viewing their segment of the interview, footage will be placed in storage for four years in case needed by the researcher for future research endeavors.

Summary

This chapter contains the study design in which the research was conducted. The use of a qualitative design is essential in the study due to the historical nature of the study (Sofaer, 1999). This chapter also contains details on the sample that is being used as well

as the site in which the research will be conducted. The way in which data will be collected; processed and handles after research is complete is also included in the chapter. The limitation section of the chapter explains the possible obstacles that I faced while conducting this research.

CHAPTER IV

Results

This study was conducted to explore the lived experiences of seven African American males who are currently enrolled at or attended Eastern Illinois University over the past seven decades. In this chapter, I present these experiences chronologically to facilitate better understanding of how each experience connected to the decade immediately preceding and succeeding in an attempt to qualitatively document the trends. While the experiences of each participant were unique they were also bound together by common attributes. I organize their stories by broad categories related to the specific questions asked.

The participants

The participants were seven African American males who had attended the institution of interest over the past seven decades. I created pseudonyms to protect their identity. Furthermore, to increase the meaningfulness of the analysis, I gave each participant a name based upon the personal quality or attributes with which I identified the strongest (Table 4. 1).

"The Educator" (1955-1959). Dr. David Yancey was raised in Danville, Illinois. He attended Eastern Illinois University from 1955-1959 after which he graduated with a bachelor's degree. One year later he attained his master's degree. While at the university Yancey participated in football and track and field. Dr. Yancey went on to teach in Danville, Illinois where he later became principal and then Superintendent of District 118. Yancey now serves on the Illinois Board of Higher Education.

Table 4.1

Participant Information Chart

Salient Attribute	Pseudonym	Purpose	Year Attended
"The Educator"	Dr. James Yancey	This participant has served as an educator, principle and super intendant for several decades.	1955-1959
"The Minister"	Rev. Hamilton Love	This participant, although a trained counselor is an ordained minister and has been a clergyman for several decades.	1969-1973
"The Law"	Mr. Maxwell Dubois	This participant has served in law enforcement in a plethora of difference capacities for decades.	1977-1980
"The Coach"	Mr. Miles Harrington	This participant has coached high school sports for a number of years.	1979-1984
"The Solider"	Mr. Augustus Duval	This participant has been in the military in various capacities for twenty years.	1988-1996
"The Scholar"	Mr. Leo Hampton	This participant is a professor of African American Studies.	2004-2008
"The Thespian"	Mr. Amiri Hampton	This participant is a theater student and plans on pursuing a career in acting after completing his undergraduate degree.	2009- currently enrolled

"The Minister" (1969-1973). Reverend Hamilton Love (1960). Hamilton Love was born on Chicago's south side on July 9, 1951. He attended Eastern Illinois University where he became a member of Omega Psi Phi Fraternity Inc., the Black Student Association and the Gospel Choir. Love graduated from Eastern Illinois University with a B. S. in Business Administration and M. S. in Education. He then went on to earn a Doctorate in Theology from Andersonville Baptist Seminary.

"The Law" (1969-1973). Maxwell Dubois, known around the campus of Eastern Illinois University as "Fonz" was born in Chicago, Illinois. He attended Eastern Illinois University from 1977 to 1980. While at the university he played football and was also a

member of Alpha Phi Alpha Inc. Dubois now works in law enforcement in the Chicago land area.

"The Coach" (1979-1984). Miles Harrington attended Eastern Illinois University from 1979 to 1984. Mr. Harrington was born and raised on the Southside of Chicago. While at Eastern Illinois University he majored in Physical Education. He also gained membership to Phi Beta Sigma Fraternity Inc. Miles Harrington later went to serve as a Physical Education teacher and girls basketball coach at a school in the suburbs of Chicago.

"The Solider" (1988-1996). Augustus Duval was born and raised in Danville, Illinois. He graduated from Eastern Illinois University in 1996. Mr. Duval served in Operation Desert Storm. Mr. Duval currently works as a Veteran Service Officer for the State of Illinois and also District Service Officer; District Commander for the 19th district American legion.

"The Scholar" (2004-2008). Leo Hampton was born and raised on the South Side of Chicago in the Roseland Community. He attended Eastern Illinois University from 2004 to 2010. While at the university he acquired his B.A and M.A in English. He was also very involved within the campus community. He now resides in Chicago and teaches African American Studies at a community college in Illinois.

"The Thespian" (2009-currently enrolled). Amiri Hampton has attended Eastern Illinois University since 2009. He is currently a senior Theater major at Eastern Illinois University. He was born and raised in Dalton, Illinois. Mr. Hampton is a member of Kappa Alpha Psi Fraternity Inc. and S. T. R. O. N. G Mentoring. He is also an active member of NAACP and volunteers at the local high school.

Content Analysis

Results of content analysis by interview protocol question revealed seven major categories (Table 4. 2) encompassing minor themes.

Faculty or staff relations. Participants reported negative and positive experiences with the faculty and staff of Eastern Illinois University. Negative experiences often included lowered expectations, lack of accommodation, "culture shock, stereotype threat, and "being the only one."

Table 4.2

Definitions, and Frequency of Occurrence Themes Among A Sample of African American Males.

Categories	Definition	Frequency
Faculty or Staff Relations	This describes the participants' mentions of interactions between Caucasian faculty and staff at Eastern Illinois University	15
Race relations	This describes the participant's mentions of race or racism specifically from Caucasian individuals.	17
Intra-racial relations	This describes the participant's mentions of interactions between African American students at Eastern Illinois University.	17
Campus involvement	This describes the participants mentions of any involvement on campus be it sports or registered student organizations.	11
Mentoring	This describes the participant's mentions of mentors or being mentored while at Eastern Illinois University.	10
Campus climate	This describes the participant's mentions of the social and cultural atmosphere of Eastern Illinois University during the time they were enrolled.	13
Black Greek Letter Organizations.	This describes the participant's mentions of Black Greek Organizations and the experience they had with Black Greek Organization at the university.	11

Positive experiences included caring professors and librarian staff and small class sizes. For example, "The Educator" (1955-1959) recounted that although relationships with professors were generally fine, that there was at least one experience of *lowered expectations* because of his race, and consequently he was motivated to prove that professor wrong:

I had a fine relationship with my professors. Only one incident that I can recall when a comment was made relative to expectations around my performance in a science class, but I hope I handled that quite well. I was the only Black in the class. Yes it was highlighted that he had never had a Black to receive a grade higher than a 'C' I of course challenged him on that and proved him wrong.

On the other hand, "The Minister" (1969-1973) expressed that European American faculty and staffs pervasive *lack of knowledge of or cross cultural interaction* with students of African descent impeded their ability to accommodate them:

They don't know in general enough about us to even know how to accommodate us. A lot of European Americans have never been in an environment with anybody but them, so they don't understand. They have never been to my neighborhood. They never went to my schools. They never lived on the South Side of Chicago, so there was not much accommodation.

Love recalled an incident when his instructor's failure to take the time to become familiar with him not only as a student but as an African American male student resulted in misinterpretation of the instructions on an assignment.

So there is a whole different standard. My professor asked the class to write a paper on what it will be like to be a gentleman. I never heard of the word, so I

debated to myself! don't think the term exist (a real gentleman don't exist). So, I wrote the paper on why gentleman does not exist.

He went on to recall feelings of being different due to dissimilarities in early classroom experiences which became particularly salient moving from having mostly African American instructors to mostly European American instructors.

Then you run into just differences. They don't know you, you don't know them, and they don't know your ways and anybody like you. So with that in mind it's always an issue of getting to know. By growing up in Chicago and going to a predominately African American schools where all of my instructors were African American, I have only had two European American instructors, but when I got here I hadn't had European American instructors so it was a new world to get into a classroom when all your teachers were white.

He went on to describe how instructors did not go that extra step to help with his development as a student.. He shared, "So you in this class... This is what I want, here is the syllabus, and this is when I want the paper turned in."

Love also expressed how this same attitude was also noticeable when he attended graduate school at Eastern Illinois University where his training as a counselor did not include working with African Americans or Hispanics. He said,

...I came back here to go to school in the 90's, I did a counseling program. . .

There was not one course to teach me how to counsel African Americans or Hispanics. All of my training was based upon dealing with the general population. Now they eventually added one course and it probably was multicultural counseling.

Love's account also embodied *self-fulfilling prophecies* when he attributed poor performance partially to others' expectations of him:

I've seen some situations where I probably didn't get the best grade in the world, because maybe they didn't understand where I was coming from and I have had some assumptions that maybe I wasn't going to work up to the level that they expected me to because I was African American. That type of thing.

Contrary to the negative experiences from the participants from the 50s to 60s, "The Coach" (1979-1984) had nothing but positive things to say about the institution and its staff. These experiences were centered around *small class sizes* fostering greater interaction with instructors and friendships built around a common major:

I was a double major and the reason I like the school was that all the teachers knew you and with physical education we had to interact with each other. We took some classes where the professor will lecture and you didn't get the chance to interact with other students, but with us we had to talk to each other. We researched each other, we did stats on each other, and we encouraged each other.

"The Soldier" emphasized the challenges that instructors had of making content relatable to student which made the learning process tedious, which he attributed to the small number of minorities on campus. As a result students had to make connections for themselves despite conspicuous differences.

It was somewhat a strain. The ratio of Caucasian to African American to any other minority was overwhelming. You were always the smallest part of the group. And sometimes that meant trying to stay in line with what they were doing, what they were working on. But you had to relate it to your own

experience, which sometimes doesn't match you but you still have to be a part of that and bring your ideas to the bigger group. So it's hard to break through that little mode to some degree, but you know at the end of the day it's about the book work and there's always a right answer. You have to get your opinion out there regardless of the cultural difference.

Like the soldier, "The Scholar" (2004-2008) applauded some of the university's faculty and staff. He recounted a story about when he was in the library studying and how a kind gesture of one of the librarians solidified his thoughts of some of the faculty and staff of the university:

The great thing about Eastern is that you can have such intimate relationships with staff and faculty that do care about you. The race is out the window. They have been seeing people of different races and cultures for about 20, 30, 40, 50 years or their whole lives coming through that institution, so they will talk to anybody; they will be generous to anybody. They don't really care when it comes to that. There have been times that I have been sitting in Booth Library and I was researching all day. I officially knew I had been in Booth library too long when one librarian walked up to me and she was like, "do you want back a rub because you have been sitting here for four or five hours and you look stressed and tired." I was like sure whatever it's been a long week. But that willingness to have some sort of contact. .. I can say that my biggest connection to Eastern was with Professor [REDACTED]. He had been really a guide to me in many ways and without that relationship I don't know if I would be in the place that I am in now. The way I think about myself and the way I think about Eastern in general.

The trend towards more positive experiences with faculty and staff was exemplified by "The Thespian" (2009-currently enrolled) who shared that increasing *involvement* resulted in a change in his experiences. The more I've got involved the more I started coming in contact with staff and once I became a theater major that's when the experiences started to change.

He also described the discomfort resulting from being the "only black male".

Just like the theater major, there aren't a lot of black people at all. The classes are a lot smaller. You have 10-15 people in the class and most are white females.

Some of them are guys but you know. Most of the time out of the majority of the English classes I took, I can remember being the only black male. "

Although "The experience with the teacher wasn't that good", he admitted that they would try not to discriminate: "Teachers would try to not show difference between the way they treated you and the way they treated the rest of the students..." He also pointed to differences in treatment between White female and White male instructors:

[had some teachers who would reason with me and still reach out to me, mainly the white female teachers. As far as the white male teachers it was always about the grade. If you want to come see me come see me, it was never that extra step. I had white female teachers that took that extra step.

He even articulated some advantages to being Black in the theater program:

Since I have become a theater major the experiences haven't been bad at all. In a lot of ways, they love the fact that I'm a black male. One of the shows they are doing this year is Dutchman by Amiri Baraka, written by a black man. It's about a black man but it's being directed by a white female. I had a certain feeling

about that because she is the same teacher that taught the History of African American Theater, but she is really open towards my ideas on the perspective of the Black play and the context of the script. She really does take that step to really say, "What do you think about this" as oppose to no I have it all understood.

Racial interactions. Participants reported negative and positive experiences in regards to race relations at the university while they were in attendance. Negative experiences often included being forbidden to patron a restaurant or public venue based solely on race. Positive experiences included great roommate/teammate experiences and positive instructors. For example, when I asked "The Educator" (1955-1959) about his experience with dealing with his Caucasian counterparts he expressed that it was mostly positive. He accredits his positive experience to his involvement with athletics at the university. Yancey shared stories about traveling with the football team and the adversity he had to endure while on the road with the football team.

I quite frankly got along pretty well with individuals. And I think a lot of that was due to my involvement in athletics and there was not a great deal of social interaction between the races at that particular time. I think that being an athlete had a great deal to do with how you were able to maneuver around campus because you were well known. You got to be well known based upon your participation in athletics. And in many cases off campus you became known. . . . On the other hand, I experienced racism when we traveled to play games. Whether it was in the state or throughout Southern Illinois, Michigan or Missouri we were all faced with various degrees of racism.

He went on to describe a time that he was refused service at a restaurant and directed to the back of a theatre while out with his majority White teammates:

In Northern Indiana Coach O'Brien had given me the money for food. None of us had any money, but he had given some money for the meal and he went into the hotel. I remember I was flatly refused service in the restaurant. Many of my colleagues had already ordered milkshakes, hamburgers and so forth and they had to leave it because they didn't have money to pay for it. I was asked to go around the corner to some other place, because they wouldn't serve me there... As well as when we were going to attend a movie and they [theatre employee] directed me to the back of the theatre... the athletes chose not to attend the show, so we all went back and got on the bus and ended up waiting for the game.

I was very interested in how school desegregation impacted Yancey's collegiate experience. Dr. Yancey gave an account of how the desegregation showed no negative signs on campus. However, he recounts his experiences of traveling through towns to get from his hometown to the university. He also recounted how the town that the university is located was at the time toward African Americans.

Well at that particular time desegregation had just gotten under way in 1954, I got there at 1955. I did not see evidence of a negative impact on campus of the desegregation. However, in going through some of the towns from Danville to Charleston Illinois there was some evidence that, racial attitudes were still rather raw. Well I think north of the campus itself! did not see a lot of negative examples, but when you cross 16th street going toward the town there was

evidence of name calling and so forth that was experienced during that period of time.

"The Minister" (1969-1973) echoed "The Educator" (1955-1959) by expressing that although Charleston had its racial shortcomings; it was not the worst place to be an African American male during the 1960s. However, similar to "The Educator" (1955-1959), "The Minister" (1969-1973) recalls how *negatively the townspeople reacted to African Americans*.

... Charleston is not the worst place in Illinois, but on the other hand Charleston is a place filled with people that are set in their ways. At the time I was here there was a team, they came from Champaign with African Americans. It ended up being a killing at one of the bars. It ended up that an African American killed one of the citizens from this town and from that there were some words passed around that they were out to get people of color. I went to school with people that had served in Vietnam so they sat out all night with their rifles just waiting.

While the community of Charleston appeared to be unwelcoming to the African American students who were enrolled at the university, Love made it clear that the racial climate on campus was somewhat different. When asked about the racial climate on campus he said,

Theatre, the dormitory, the radio station, working with a student president; there was not a problem. We got along together, good relationship with my roommate and classmates. You know typically in a class you got to do group work. So I never saw a problem. It was pretty smooth.

Like the other two participants, "The Law" (1969-1973) reported generally having a good experience on campus in regards to race relations. When asked about his interactions with his Caucasian peers he recalled his experience with one of his White roommates:

The first year I lived in Thomas Hall and I can say that it was positive. I mean everybody knew me and they called me by my first name. I thought it was a sense of respect, at the time. I was always asked to go out and participate, to have some fun, you know "would you like to come along?" So I can consider it as positive.

He also described having diverse groups of friends while at Eastern Illinois University which enriched his learning experience. He accredits his current ability to get along with different types of individuals to his stay at Eastern Illinois University.

You meet a lot of folks that are from different places, and I'm not just speaking African American, I'm speaking of the White population as well. I've met people from Oblong, Illinois; Effingham, all over. I met people from the country. One guy I know would go home on the weekends to go home and work on a farm. He would come back and we'd talk about his experience or what he did this weekend. The transition it was something, it wasn't hard to live with, it wasn't anything negative; it was just a cultural difference. I had my culture coming from the inner city of Chicago, and I learned a lot. It was a learning experience just to put it like that, to learn what this culture was like.

Similarly "The Coach" (1979-1984) saw his tenure at Eastern Illinois University as an opportunity to interact with people of different races.

You know it really wasn't that much of a difference because I was already in with the Blacks. I didn't just hang out with the Sigma's. Some people only hung out with their group but I interacted with all the Greek organizations also the White organizations.

"The Solider" (1988-1996) explained that his experiences were positive too; however he attributes that to his demeanor and how he carried himself. He mentioned that he stayed focused while he was at the university and when he did interact with his Caucasian counterparts he demanded their respect.

It was positive. I mean because I come up from a real strict family. I really had good ethical training. You know, you speak when you're spoken to. You don't have to go out and drum up business. You just go about your day. If something gets in your way you deal with it positively. You don't let people just walk over you. My mother used to say this all the time, "People will only do to you what you allow them to do." So if you don't allow it they won't do it.

Unlike the other participants, "The Scholar" (2004-2008) explained that his experiences with Caucasian were mixed. However, the positive overwhelming over shadowed the negative which he believed stemmed from ignorance.

My interactions with people of different races on campus were very mixed.

Some of my best friends I still talk to and still work with today are quote on quote white dudes from the middle of the corn fields. As far as dealing with issues of race and racism on Victory's campus, for me I didn't really experience that.

What I experienced were people that just did not fully understand my experience or the experience of other people coming from similar areas as myself.

"The Thespian" (2009-currently enrolled) articulated that the limited number of African Americans in classes within his major often led to him playing the role of, the token black guy. He mentions however, that he is not bothered by this and looks at it as a time to educate people who may not know much about the culture.

Pretty much everyone in my class isn't all black. I have this performance class. It's called Scene and Character Studies. Basically, what we do all throughout the year is choose a scene. Sometime we have to do it with a partner or sometime by ourselves. However, it stands out that you're the black guy. Even when people try to suggest a scene to you race is consistently a factor. They come to you with a scene like the black guy and white girl. Or they try to pick a scene that's catered toward you. I'm usually like "I don't care. I can play whatever. I can make the guy black." I'm playing Scrooge in the Christmas Carol and of course you know the story line there's a ghost of Christmas past so he has to look at his past. So it's a young version of me but with their being three black guys in the whole department and the other two guys are tech majors not performers they placed a white guy to play the younger version of me. Of course, I clear the air and I make the jokes myself. You get some people who are comfortable making the joke like, "yea I see the resemblance. I feel like if you're comfortable you're comfortable, if you're not or if you step over the line I'm going to check you and let you know. But for the most part I'm non-confrontational really. But I haven't had many of those head on experiences where I feel like I've been violated.

Experiences involving intra-racial interactions. Participants reported mostly positive experiences in regards to interacting with other African Americans. However,

during the beginning of school integration there was a limited number of African Americans at predominantly white institutions. "The Educator" (1955-1959) recounted his time at the institution and how the *lack of structured programs and/or activities* hindered the African American population from interacting with one another. He mentioned,

Most of them [African Americans] at that particular time were there around athletic programs and there was either track basketball or football. It was less than 100 [African Americans]. We interacted just in passing because we had no organized groups on campus, so we had to facilitate our own social activities. I am looking back through over half of about 50 years but I think if we had had an opportunity for to get together to share, and to have an identity on campus around race it would have certainly been a plus for all of us during that particular time period. We were sort of isolated in the sense that you met the individual on campus, but socially that interaction was pretty much limited to whether you were an athlete or you ran into the person or you were in class with another African American.

As the years progressed, more programs were set in place for the growing African American population at the university. "The Minister" (1969-1973) spoke about the state of the Black community upon his arrival and how the Black student population was very cohesive during this time.

There were only 50 African Americans on this campus prior to me getting here.

When we came we were the largest class of African Americans that boosted it up to about 125 African Americans on campus. The experience was pretty positive

amongst us. You still had a lot of *things going on in the town with racism* and all of that, but I can't come up with much negativism.

"The Minister" (1969-1973) also mentioned a building was dedicated to the Black students on campus. This location served as the epicenter of all things Black at one point of time. He shared with me how they used this facility.

We used it for a lot of things. For instance, even when we had reunions it was a central place. We used it for studying. We used to use it for meetings. They happened to use it for parties, so to speak. For homecoming they had parties and sets there... They have had it for meet and greets for sororities or fraternities. They have used it for a lot of stuff.

Eastern Illinois University did not have programs, clubs, or organizations established to accommodate its African American student population. However, in the 1970s the university witnessed the emergence of the Black Student Union (BSU). "The Law" (1969-1973) recalls the impact that BSU had on him and the campus alike.

Black Student Union was something that we needed at the time. At the time there were approximately 400 black students down there and it was an avenue where we could actually look at and just see that it was us. We all respected each other and don't get me wrong we had our differences, just like anything else but it was a good time.

Similar to "The Minister" (1969-1973), "The Law" (1969-1973) spoke of the importance of the "Black House" as the assembling venue and the impact that it had on the African American student body during that time.

We had all type of social events at the Black house. We met as a fraternity there.

We came together we had held BSU meetings there as well. It was a place to go and basically hang where you can relate to a lot of things that were going on the campus with a lot of your classmates.

When discussing the Black community at Eastern Illinois University during the time he was enrolled "The Coach" (1979-1984) spoke of the family-like attitude shared amongst the African Americans on campus. He also shared the importance of basic things such as grooming and hygiene that were affected as a result of attending a predominantly white institution.

The camaraderie alone was great. Most of the Blacks at our school knew each other and it was just the thing to get involved, even though with my experience I was involved with a lot of Blacks already. You just got to know everyone.

White Privilege was exemplified when he shared the importance of basic things such as grooming and hygiene that were affected as a result of attending a predominantly white institution and the lack of services in the community for Black males:

You take for granted where you are going to get your hair cut. . However, things like that where you get the haircut, where you get Magic Shave™, at that time that was a big thing because we didn't know. Some of us would go back home before we got a haircut. But we also had barbers and some of the brothers -not frat brothers but the black brothers that would cut hair and the girls would worry about their nails or as a matter of fact I had a student that went to Eastern and she did nails and she made money from the students because she did nails.

"The Coach" (1979-1984) also discussed the social experience shared amongst the African Americans on campus during the time he was enrolled. He expressed to me the things they would have to go through in order to listen to the music they were used to in their dorms.

Well the music, well one thing we didn't have cable, we didn't have radio actually if you lived on the 10th floor of Carmen 10th and 9th you could get... I think it was called inagic something it came out of East St Louis. We couldn't get any Chicago stations so we would huddle upstairs and have little dances. That was the only time because I didn't have a lot-I had friends that had albums...

"The Solider" (1988-1996) also alluded to the Black social scene at the university. He mentioned that the Black Greeks provided African American students with social outlets.

Pretty much there were students from your home town, East Saint Louis, Chicago. You learn to gather together and try to openly work together, Of course we had good sports you go to the game. You party on the weekend if it's available. The Black fraternities and sororities would always throw a set on the weekends, so there was something to do most of the time.

In the 2000s I began to see a number of clubs and organizations on campus to accommodate African American students. While these programs were set in place to better assist Black students, some individuals did not agree with the direction in which they were going. "The Scholar" (2004-2008) expressed that when he arrived on campus did not agree with all of the initiatives set forth by these organizations. However, he

explained that during his time at the university he had witness organizations become purpose driven and better overall.

When I came to Eastern I saw the NAACP organization and the BSU. For me back in 2004, 2005 when I was first on campus, my impressions of those organizations were that they weren't necessarily as developed as they could be. That was the running joke BSU they were BSU. It changed a whole lot from 2005 to 2010. They did become a whole lot more active on campus, they were a lot more visible and connected on campus, that was thanks to some people deciding to make the decision that were are not going to stay in this old form of BSU we are going to develop more. I wanted the African student Association; because for me I saw the BSU before and I didn't necessarily want to be connected to that.

Campus involvement. Participants who expressed that they were involved while attending EIU reported mostly positive experiences. Involvement mostly included culturally specific organizations. However, prior to the creation of culture specific organizations, involvement was limited to athletics. For example, "The Educator" (1955-1959)" described his experiences with campus involvement as athletics due to the lack of organizations and clubs on campus for African Americans. He explained, "No organizations but athletic sports yes, and we had a football program and also a track program at Victory."

On the other hand, "The Minister" (1969-1973) was involved in a number of clubs and organizations. Some of these organizations were African American focused

and some were not. When asked about his involvement while in attendance at Eastern he said,

I was involved with the radio station. I had a jazz program at night I played music for. The second thing I was involved in is the fraternity I pledged as a freshman. The Black Pan-Hellenic Council I was the president of. It was in an effort to get our Black Greeks working together. I was also involved as one on the first members of a group called ECHOES which was the equivalent of EIU UNITY now. It was a Black gospel chorus and I was the vice president of that chorus. When they did the dedication of the Union we performed. The university sponsored us so we could use their cars. They bought our robes and we'd go all over central Illinois singing.

Similar to "The Minister" (1969-1973), "The Law" (1969-1973) was involved in various organizations. He recounted "I was involved with football and I did a little journalism. I wrote for the school newspaper and I was a member of Alpha Phi Alpha fraternity." When asked about the extent of his involvement in the university's newspaper he shared that it was short lived experience.

"The Coach" (1979-1984) didn't mention any direct involvement. However from other question that we asked during the interview, he alluded to being a member of Phi Beta Sigma Fraternity Incorporated.

"The Solider" (1988-1996) was not very involved either because of personal reasons which motivated him to be more academically focused. He expressed that although he lived on campus during the weekdays, he commuted back to his home town for personal reason and was unable to participate in many things.

My dad was sick. I was traveling back and forth to Danville. The only thing that was on my mind was really getting finished. When I left and went into the services it was kind of like a journey. I left, I knew I wanted to go back. I knew I didn't have the means to go back and I didn't want to put that burden on anybody so it was pretty much me it was make or break for me. I just joined as a regular CJ listed, made my way through the ranks. Even when I got out I was successful in that. I could have easily stayed but my goal was to get that degree.

"The Scholar" (2004-2008), on the other hand expressed to me that he was very involved during his stay at EIU. When asked the question about his involvement he shared that he was involved with sports as a means of maintaining structure in his life. He also alluded to the struggles that he had to endure being an African American president of an African student association.

I was Vice president and President of the EIU African Association. I was the first African American in the history of the organization to hold those positions. I was also a part of Eastern Illinois track and field team from 2004 to 2008. I did sports for a personal reason. I needed a way to order my life on campus. I needed a structure. I needed a place where I felt I could develop a talent that I didn't have a chance to develop much in high school. As for ASA, there were people who were very much against the idea of an African American having those positions in the African students association. There were some who did not feel positively about it what is this African American like he knows nothing about Africa- which led into some very interesting conversations when I started talking about

my travels to south Africa, and the fact that I had been to Africa which is sort of moved me into a different category for some people.

Like many of the other participants, "The Thespian" (2009-currently enrolled) was involved at Eastern Illinois University. He mentioned why he was involved.

Yea, I was on the EIU forensics team. It's Speech, where you travel to different colleges and compete in debate and performance things like that. I was also President of Kappa Alpha Psi, general member of S. T. R. O. N. G Mentoring and NAACP. I did speech in high school. My senior year I won a state championship so I came here, and I found out they did scholarships. I wasn't a big fan of the coach or the team. It pays full tuition scholarships if you participate. That's why I did speech. NAACP...! was a member. Well, my wife has always been interested in African-American studies so once she became a member, I became a member. I stayed a member because eventually she became president and as her involvement increased I became more involved in it.

Mentoring. Several of the participants reported having mentors while they attended Eastern Illinois University. Mentors were White, Black, male and female; faculty and peers. For example, "The Educator" (1955-1959) expressed that his football coach served as a mentor for him.

I think I had some excellent coaches in football. I had Pat O'Brien who is a legendary coach there that the stadium is named after who coached both football and when I got there and who was my track coach when I got there. Then we had some changes after that, but after that I had an excellent experience with all the coach there. I never felt any real differences based upon my experiences with the

athletic program there. To most of the black athlete there he [Coach O'Brien] took us under his wing, he made sure that we were comfortable. I can recall incidence when I didn't have any money and I needed to ask him for funds to get home and it was never with any hesitation at all. He was just a great man.

"The Minister" (1969-1973) mentioned that mentors within the faculty were rare. However, he did find elements of mentoring within his fraternity. He said, "By me coming here and knowing nothing about fraternities and seeing a couple of guys that were wonderful and at that time I just wanted to be a part of them, so I just said I wanted to be a part of them. "

As the years went on EIU began to see more minority faculty and staff. The minority faculty and staff served as surrogate parents and mentors to the African American student population. "The Law" (1969-1973) shared that he had two individuals who showed special interest in his success at the university.

I met a lot fantastic people that have impacted my life from there including a lot of the black faculty that was there, the Jonetta Jones', the Dr. Ridgeways and things like that had a big impact. Ms. Jones, she was available for each and every one of us that needed to talk, a lot of folks that came in they talked about like being home sick. It was just that mother figure that you had down there and that was just the impact that she had on a lot of African Americans lives that she had at the time.

He also mentioned how Ms. Jones urged the African American student body to learn more about their culture.

I took her class African American studies and actually this was one of the, it was the second African American studies course that I had taken since High school and it was something that I felt that every African American student that came down to that university should experience.

"The Law" (1969-1973) wasn't the only one of the participants who came into contact with Dr. Jones. "The Coach" (1979-1984) also had the opportunity to be mentored by Dr. Jones as well. When I asked him about Dr. Jones she shared a story about how Dr. Jones helped him graduate from college.

We had a professor Dr. Jones. She really helped me through school and actually I didn't see my advisor Dr. Jones until I got to be a senior when actually I messed up my grades. I was a class from graduating but that class was only offered in the spring, or I missed two or something so I went to my advisor. He was a white guy. He said, "what are you gonna do?" I said, "well that's why I'm here. I recognize I screwed it up. Is there something I can switch around? He didn't help me. Dr. Jones told me look Johnny she changed classes for me and gave me a chance so that I could graduate. Actually I would have had to go to school for another year and I only had to go to school for another semester. She took care of us. She was like a mother to us and she took care of all of us and gave us good advice. We knew what she said was true, because she was looking out for us. We felt that she actually did, and I also got that experience from my other professors at Eastern-- not just Dr. Jones. Maybe because she was black and a little older we kind of moved toward her for motherhood, but she was a fine lady and very professional.

Unlike "The Coach" (1979-1984), "The Solider" (1988-1996) found most of his mentors within his circle of neighborhood friends who attended Victory.

Yea there were some instructors that were pretty positive I would say. Mainly I looked up to my older friends that really got me started. They kept me focused. It was kind of like a step ladder. They were being successful finishing and they were making sure everybody else was making it through as well. You see, I was brought to Eastern through my block. I had some older guys on my block and that's just how we did it. We grab one another and reached back and grab each other. My next door neighbor [REDACTED] reached back and got Derek Rose he went back and got me. We reached back and got one another.

"The Scholar" (2004-2008) mentioned that he found a mentor in an English professor who taught at the university. He accredits this professor with helping him cope with the university and assisting him in realizing who he was as an individual.

I can say that my biggest connection to Eastern was with Professor Michael Loudon. He had been really a guide to me in many ways, and without that relationship I don't know if I would be in the place that I am in now. The way I think about myself and the way I think about Eastern in general.

When I asked the Thesbian (2009 - Currently enrolled) about mentors he may have had at Eastern Illinois University he shared how a student group developed for minority males has served as a source for being mentored. He also alluded to how mentoring is very essential to the success of minority men in college.

S. T. R. O. N. G Mentoring in a nutshell did it for me. I can remember Dwayne Jenkins constantly saying "you coming to S.T.R.O.N.G?" I have been going to the meetings ever since. Mentoring has definitely kept me on a certain path and it's not to say that I'm one of those people who are in a lot of trouble. As far as the idea, I have been mentored without even realizing I was being mentored. I think, especially for black men, I think when we get to college and we think we got it all figured out, we have this independence about ourselves. We have this aggressiveness about our self. When you put that aggression with the freedom that college gives you, we just like "all we got it, I'm in college, I'm a black man in college, I'm doing well, and I'm doing better than the rest. " Which it might be true but, you kind of still have to rely on other people.

"The Thespian" (2009-currently enrolled) also mentioned that most of his mentors are actually Black women. He accredits their ability to successfully mentor African American men to their ability to understand the black man mentality.

A lot of my mentors were females. I think it's something about the way African American women understand the mentality of African American males. Not say thing that men don't. Even my own wife in a lot of ways she is a mentor to me you know what I'm saying. One of my high school directors was a female and she steered me into going to college. So a lot of my mentors have been African American women and they serve as some of the best mentors for black males.

Campus Climate. Participants shared with me the climate of Eastern Illinois University while they were enrolled. Responses varied from positive social campus climates to negative social campus climates. For example, "The Educator" (1955-1959)

recounted Eastem's climate during the early days of the civil rights movement. He mentioned that EIUs campus didn't actually mirror what was occurring at other campus across the country.

I think about that quite a bit because I also know that things were happening all around the country at that time the 1950's and the 60's a great deal was happening in terms of incidence racial incidence on college campuses. I am not saying that it wasn't the void of that it was not obvious as much as what you were seeing on TV occurring and I credit a lot of that to staff there. I credit a lot of that to the athletic programs and always to a lot of the individuals that for one reason or another felt the need to intercede at the right time and make sure that those were on campus represented the different races for the most part. I felt comfortable there.

"The Minister" (1969-1973), on the other hand, shared with me an image of EIU that did mirror the times. When asked about the campus climate during the time he was enrolled "The Minister" (1969-1973) shared stories of meetings with the president of the university, student protest and sit-ins that occurred on campus.

When I came here we had to actually go in full protest in the president's office. So, the things that you see like the Martin Luther King Union that was based upon the protest. The black cultural center, that was based upon the Black protest, a lot of things that you consider as normal, it happened because we protested. And so we got a lot of rights based upon protesting. We actually had a sit in in the president's office and we wouldn't leave, so the president listened to our demands and what we wanted to happen on this campus. So, down the road the president would invite our fraternity to his house to personally, all of the members of the

black sororities and fraternities were invited. So I have had an actual opportunity to go into his actual house and sit down and talk to him as a person. Well prior to that there was no, this was the beginning of Black frats and sororities. So they were not used to us even as a group other than the Black student association.

"The Minister" (1969-1973) then explained the controversy surrounding the naming of the Martin Luther King Student Union.

We'll see that was one of the demands that were made to the city and the town for the college. The president at that time I think his name was Gilbert Fite. The university wanted to make us feel more comfortable at this university and one of the demands was that the name of the Union be changed to the Martin Luther King Union. Now you do know that there was a new Union built but we had the original union which was just the one building named Martin Luther King Union we only had that one building now when you cross the circle drive that was the new union which wasn't built at that time yet.

"The Minister" (1969-1973) then began to dig deeper into why there was even controversy behind the naming of the student union.

Well here is the biggest thing and let me just show you this. If this library for years and years and years was named Booth Library, when we came here we never asked the question why it was named Booth Library or there's a building that was called Old Main. I can't even remember, but there were some other buildings... Buzzard hall, Blair hall or the gym. None of us ever asked how they got to be named, so the one building that you will ever find on this campus that has the name of a person of color I guarantee you it will probably be the MLK

building. None of us asked a question we just came and accepted whatever the names were. That was it. We don't know how Taylor Hall because Taylor or Thomas became Thomas we don't have a clue, so imagine - the people that fought against the MLK Union didn't know where those names came from either, but they accepted them because that was already done. You had some people kicking, why would they get to name a building after a civil right person. All these other folks they died and got a building named after them -what did they do? Did they accomplish as much as Dr. King?

During "The Minister" (1969-1973) time at the university the campus had its share of conflict brought about by racism. "The Law" (1969-1973) spoke of a harmonious time on campus that was motivated by the success of the football team.

There was the national championship, and the program was basically put on the map then. It was a good experience, and the whole town and campus came together. You could see folks; it was just a fun time, it was something that was good for the city of Charleston.

When I asked "The Coach" (1979-1984) about the campus climate he shared with me a story about an incident that occurred among some young men on his floor. In the story epitomized two sides of the campus' climate. On one hand there was bigotry and on the other friendship.

I lived in a quad when I was at Victory. I stayed in Carmen Hall in a quad that is officially two rooms but one door way, so I lived in the front half of the quad and people lived on the other side. They had to walk through my room to actually leave and go out. So I had a suite mates. Three white boys. Gary was from

Homewood, Bill was from Salem-Bill had never known a black person, and Mike was from Palatine. All of them were cool and I liked them but we had this one situation when we were out drinking and we came back and there was a party going on. My roommates were in a different quad with someone. It was all white people; they were playing cards or doing something like that. So, we get back and my roommate was crying. And I said "what's wrong with Bill?" They didn't want to tell me but they said that Bill got into a fight with another white boy on the floor while they were playing cards. What happened was they were playing cards and one of the boys (not one of my suite mates) asked, "So you're living with one of them?" Bill kept playing cards because it went over his head and then the guy said it again, "you living with a coon?" My roommate jumped over the table and hit the guy (Boom)! I had never in my life had someone black or white defend me like that. He told the other guy, "you don't know him he is a great guy and when you get to know him better you will know". So Bill got in a fight over me and my first impression -it embarrassed me too- but my first impression of Bill was he was a white boy from Salem, Illinois, cowboy hat and when I first saw him he had a straw in his mouth. His first words to me were-howdy. I was like this is not going to be good. (Laughs) And Bill ends up fighting for me when he was hanging out with the white people on the floor and that really impressed me. But racism was non-overt besides getting pulled over a lot, but the experience as far as the experience was great and that's why I suggest students should go to Victory.

When asking "The Solider" (1988-1996) about the campus climate he shared what it was like being a veteran and attended Eastern Illinois University. He explained that there weren't a lot of services for returning veterans on campus during that time.

Back then I don't think that they were [as] into it as they are now. They really focus on trying to help veterans transition. For me, it was more about me.

Getting back into it I was already focused. I was already disciplined. I set goals and I obtained them; goals that were achievable. Nothing is going to be easy but if you set it and you have a plan, you should be pretty successful, especially if you have some type of support network. I'm sure they were aware of the Gulf war, but I'm also sure they were not aware of the traumatic issues that came out of that like combat itself. When you come from that and try to transition to a classroom with students who are probably younger but have no real world experience, your heads and shoulders are above them. You have to learn to think. Even though your mind may work faster book wise you cannot make up the difference in experience, and that always gave me the upper hand. I'm sure they had ROTC. I'm sure they did things but I don't know. I could give you the numbers of the people who were going to the school and how to pinpoint these people. Let's just say, if you went to school right now, one of the questions they will ask you are if you have ever served in the military. You were just regular, they had no preference.

To give me a better example of the campus climate, "The Scholar" (2004-2008) shared a story about the day that President Barak Obama was first elected in 2008. He shared the reactions of the people around campus in regards to the election. He then

identified how those reactions depicted the way individuals on campus viewed society in a whole.

When Barack Obama was elected it was very interesting incredible experience, because I can remember walking into the grand ballroom at Eastern and them having a projector of Barack Obama's inaugural speech and everywhere I went on campus that day there were groups of students clustered around TV's seeing that address. It was an interesting experience because having studied African American studies; having taught African American studies being African American; it felt like that there was a change that had happened in America in general. It felt like there was a change that happened on the campus, it felt like ok alright we are moving past a lot of things society and America is becoming more accepting, people understand the concepts of freedom better. In many cases it was like that in other cases it wasn't. There were people that were incredibly upset with the results of that election and those people tend to be the people that are currently upset about the current administration. These people who had very much an idea of Eastern as a campus and American society in general as being something that needed to move backwards. We needed to move backwards, back to what America was, back to what Eastern was in the past. We need to preserve the past of the university, without moving forward to addressing the issues in the present in order to move forward in the future. That was present in America society and that is present on Victory's campus.

When I asked "The Thespian" (2009-currently enrolled) about how he would describe the campus climate at the university he said that it was surprisingly open.

However, he has had conflicts on using particular campus facilities or hosting particular events on campus.

I was surprise with how open they were. Even with casting a black man to play scrooge, taking that risk when there is an old white guy who is in his 50s who could just as well play the part but they gave it to an old black guy. It made me look at the department differently. I mean I have reached a lot of roadblock trying to put on certain events. I have had a couple room request denied because I certain event wasn't seen as education or anything of that nature. So I think if they were more open minded on how black people chose to educate one another or how we feel like it's a more effective way of educating. It doesn't have to be somebody standing up there in front of a slide. With me being a performance person I like to incorporate performance into it. I had events where I wanted to talk about the depictions of race in the media and I wanted to include a ten minute sketch about something. But once you add that in it's not seen as educational so we would have a denied request. So if they could be more open minded in that regard and giving people the freedom step outside the box that would have made my experience better.

Black Greek letter organizations. Participants shared with me the impact that Black Greek Organizations (BGLO) had on their college experience during their time at Eastern Illinois University. Although the experiences with BGLOs were generally positive, some were not. Black Greek Organizations weren't in existence on campus during the time Educator (1955-1959) was enrolled,

"The Minister" (1969-1973) attended they had already becoming a part of the campus social fabric for African American males. He expressed that his fraternity gave him security, and a sense of being on the predominantly white campus.

My organization was founded at Howard university and it was founded by four men one of them being a Methodist minister and some of the tenants of what they believed was that modeled friendship was essential to soul. How can you come somewhere and not believe in friendship, manhood, perseverant, scholarship or uplift? So these were high morals to achieve to be able to function on a college campus and have a purpose for knowing where you came from and who was here before you and setting standards for those coming behind.

Like "The Minister" (1969-1973), "The Law" (1969-1973) collegiate experience was impacted greatly by his fraternity. He explained that he admires the men that were in the organization and they served as a support system to one another while they were enrolled and after the graduated. He also mentioned that he is still involved with his fraternity on the undergraduate and graduate level of the organization.

Alpha Phi Alpha was something that was presented. The brothers that were there at the time were a group of fine individuals. I admired the way they carried themselves on campus. The social projects that they did at the time were just something to admire and I just wanted to be a part of it. The brothers down there at the time were about business, a lot of the brothers were on the football team so that's how I kind of met a lot of them as well. I am still involved with heavily with the grad chapters, with the fraternity, so... presently I am president of the

Eastern Illinois AU Alumni Association, so we are still doing it thirty five years later.

Since "The Solider" (1988-1996) was involved in the military in the middle of his collegiate career, I was interested in what he thought about Black Greek Letter Organizations and the impact they had on his experience at the university. Though he wasn't directly influenced by them he mentions how he felt the impact vicariously through his friends and time in the military granted him the opportunity to experience the level of "brotherhood" that is exemplified through fraternal organizations.

It wasn't so much me. It was my friends. They had a real heavy experience with the fraternities. When I first come in that was the first thing I seen you know, Greek. It's almost like the military sometimes it's all you got. In order to be successful it has to be leaders there before you that have made it and know what ahead of you to show you the way. That's what you get with the Greek. You get a lot of that in the fraternity so I had it in a different way. I had it with just positive people that grew up in my neighborhood that told me hey this is what you are going to do and we did it.

Unlike most of the participants, "The Scholar" (2004-2008) had mixed feelings about Black Greek Organizations. He shared with me that he thought African American sororities and fraternities at the university during the time were very cliquey and did not behave like he thought they would on campus.

Based on actions of individual members, now that's not saying that the whole organization is like that individual, and that's not saying that that individual member is a representative of a whole organization. Black Greeks they were very

cliquey. Oh you can't be a part of this because you don't think this way or you don't act this way, oh well you not going out drinking with us tonight; whatever we aint dealing with you. That type of attitude was something that I ran into. I also ran into Black Greeks who were very concerned about the campus and this idea of diversity on Victory's campus, what it meant or what it looks like, how can I make my time on campus useful to everyone, not just black people on campus but everyone. And those two images they contrasted each other daily: I would see people working on the projects and the programs in order to expand the discussion of diversity on campus and at the same time I would go in front of Booth Library and see somebody acting a fool for no reason at all, or when I would go to parties or something, somebody kicked off a fight ahh shame shame shame it was a Black Greek.

Mr. Hampton (2008 - currently enrolled) shared how he became attracted to the idea of being a member of the Kappa Alpha Psi as well as the benefits of it.

Kappa Alpha Psi, I didn't know anything about being Greek when I got here but once I got here, a couple of the members Bruce Reid and Chuck Woodruff they reached out before I even knew they were Kappa. So after that I wanted to join a black male org that was doing something. I wanted to see them do more, when I got here as a freshman they were doing a lot so I wanted to see them do more so I became a member and got in the position and was able to take that initiative. It put me in a position to know people to where I could branch out and does different things. I think even like for the debut in the beginning of the school year they do the little videos "What does EIU mean to you" and you got to say a little

quote and everything and then you show up on a video of all the new students. I ended up being able to do that. Great connections you know more people. So I think that's the most positive impact it had on me. If you take advantage of it you realize that it is a gate way to the university if you get more involved."

Archival Findings

When conducting my archival research I wanted to focus on three main areas that I felt impacted the experiences of African American men at Eastern Illinois University. Those three areas were Black Greek organizations and programming done by the university. I chose Black Greek organizations because it came to be a consistent factor that impacted the experiences of the African American men in my study. From my research I discovered that Black fraternities were crucial in developing African American culture at Eastern Illinois University. By examining photographs and articles, I discovered that the height of Black fraternities on campus occurred in the 1970s (fig. 4.1 - fig. 4.76). During this time, fraternities also had female auxiliary groups (see fig. 4. 8; fig. 4. 9; fig. 4.11; fig. 4.15; fig. 4.17). However, one will notice that in the 1980s these female auxiliary groups began to disappear from Eastern Illinois University. In the 1980s and 1990s Black Greek fraternities began to decline in membership. A few of the Black fraternities also began to disappear from the university archives. However, a reemergence of Black fraternities began in the late 90s and early 2000s.

I also choose to highlight the programming/events coordinated by the University and student organizations over the seven decades under examination. From my experience being an African American male at this particular university and serving on the university's program board, I understand the importance of culturally relevant

programming for all underrepresented populations who attend EIU. As a student, when I became aware of events that pertained to African American culture I felt as if the university actually cared about its African American student demographic. While doing archival research, I began to notice a trend in the programs coordinated by the university and its student organizations. During the 1950s there weren't any culturally relevant programming taking place on campus. It is safe to assume that this was due to the small number of African Americans on campus. However, in the 1960s and 70s I notice an increase in culturally relevant programming (see fig.4.77 - fig.4.83). The reason for this increase in culturally relevant program could be due to the increase number of African Americans attending the university as well as the emergence of African American clubs and organizations. Although culturally relevant programming increased as the years went on, the content changed. During the 1960s and 70s programs were politically and culturally focused. However, in the 1980s, 90s and 2000s programs switched from politically focused to entertaining. As previously mentioned, the emergence of student organizations changed the type of programming that was being done on campus. While the university focused on programming for the entire student body, the African American student organizations organized events for the African American student body. With the cultural climate of the country and university changing, so did the programs and events.

I also examined African American male involvement. I chose to focus on involvement based upon my personal experience with organizations on campus and the experiences of the participants with student organizations. My involvement in student organizations had a direct impact on my experiences at Eastern Illinois University. It is also safe to say that the experiences of the participants involved were also effect by their

involvement or lack of involvement in student organizations. My research showed that African American men who attended EIU in the 1950s and most of the 1960s were only involved in athletics and major specific organizations (fig.4.100 - fig.4.113). However, in the 1970s the emergence of Black fraternities and social groups gave African American men at EIU organizations they could be a part of without the risk of dealing with micro-aggressions. The 1980s, 90s, and 2000s welcomed more African American organizations to campus (fig.4.114- fig.4.130).

Overall including archival research to further understand the lived experiences of the participants creates triangulation (Fick, 2009). It also gives the reader a more detailed outlook on the plight of African Americans men at this university by bringing attention to details that were not brought up in the interviews.

Black Greek organizations



Figure 4.1. Alpha Phi Apha, Warbler (1969) This figure shows the founding members of Alpha Phi Alpha Theta Nu Chapter.



Figure 4.2. Alpha Phi Alpha during Greek Week, Warbler (1969). This figure shows members of Alpha Phi Alpha participating in the Greek Week Parade.



Figure 4.3. Sphinxmen, Warbler (1970). This image shows members of Alpha Phi Alpha.



Figure 4.4. Omega Psi Phi, Warbler (1970). This image shows the founding members of the Omega Psi Phi Tau Theta Chapter.



Figure 4.5. Alpha Phi Alpha, Warbler (1977). This image shows members of Alpha Phi Alpha.



Figure 4.6. Phi Beta Sigma, Warbler (1977). This Image shows members of Phi Beta Sigma.



Figure 4.7. Omega Psi Phi, Warbler (1977). This image shows members of Omega Psi Phi.



Figure 4.9. Kappa Alpha Psi, Warbler (1977). This image shows members of Kappa Alpha Psi Fraternity Inc.



Figure 4.10. Gamma Psi Phi, Warbler (1977). This figure shows members of Gamma Psi Phi.



Figure 4.11. Gamma Phi Psi, Warbler (1978). This image shows members of Gamma Phi Psi.



Figure 4.12. Phi Beta Si_gm a, Warbler (1978). This figure shows members of Phi Beta Si_gm a Inc.



Figure 4.13. Kappa Alpha Psi, Warbler (1978). This image shows members of Kappa Alpha Psi Inc.

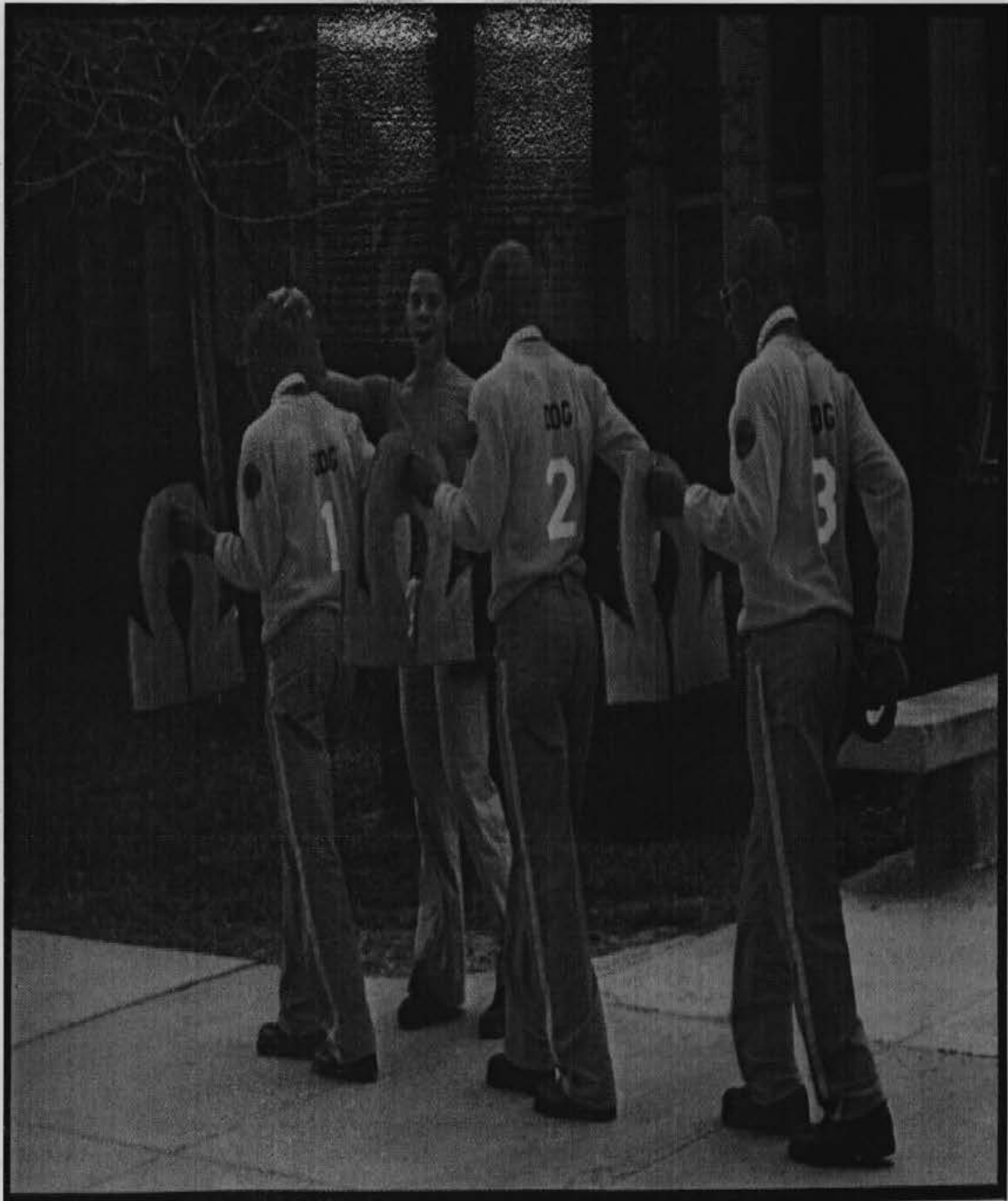


Figure 4.14. Ques on the yard, Warbler (1779). This image shows new members ,of Omega Psi Phi Inc. during their probate show.



Figure 4.15. Alpha Phi Alpha, Warbler (1979). This image shows members of Alpha Phi Alpha Inc.



Figure 4.16. Omega Psi Phi, Warbler (1979). This image shows members of Omega Psi Phi Inc.



Figure 4.17. Phi Beta Sigma, Warbler (1979). This image shows members of Phi Beta Sigma Inc.



Figure 4.18. Alpha Phi Alpha, Warbler (1980). This image shows members of Alpha Phi Alpha Inc.



Figure 4.19. Phi Beta Sigma, Warbler (1980). This image shows members of Phi Beta Sigma Inc.



Figure 4.20. Phi Beta Sigma, Warbler (1981). This image shows members of Phi Beta Sigma Inc.



Figure 4.21. Alpha Phi Alpha, Warbler (1981). This image shows members of Alpha Phi Alpha Inc.



Figure 4.22. National Pan-Hellenic Council, Warbler (1981). This image shows members of the National Pan-Hellenic Council at Eastern Illinois University.



Figure 4.23. Omega Psi Phi, Warbler (1982). This image shows, members of Omega Psi Phi Fraternity Inc.



Figure 4.24. Kappa Alpha Psi, Warbler (1982). This image shows members of Kappa Alpha Psi Fraternity Inc.



Figure 4.25. Alpha Phi Alpha, Warbler (1982). This image shows members of Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity Inc.

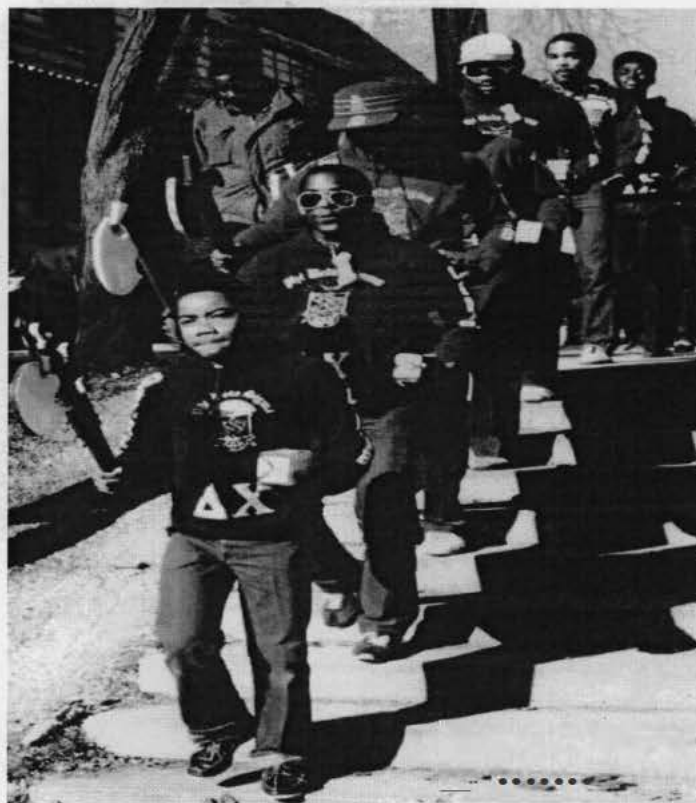


Figure 4.26. Phi Beta Sigma, Warbler (1982). This image shows members of Phi Beta Sigma Inc. marching on the quad.



Figure 4.27. Omega Psi Phi, Warbler (1982). This image shows members of Omega Psi Phi Inc.



Figure 4.28. Phi Beta Si_gm a, Warbler (1983). This Image shows members of Phi Beta Si_gm a Inc.



Figure 4.29. Kappa Alpha Psi, Warbler (1983). This image shows members of Kappa Alpha Psi Fraternity Inc.



Figure 4.30. Alpha Phi Alpha, Warbler (1983). This image shows members of Alpha Phi Alpha, Inc.



Figure 4.31. Omega Psi Phi, Warbler (1984). This image shows members of Omega Psi Phi Fraternity Inc.



Figure 4.32. Kappa Alpha Psi, Warbler (1984). This image shows members of Kappa Alpha Psi Fraternity Inc.



Figure 4.33. Alpha Phi Alpha, Warbler (1988). This image shows members of Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity Inc.



Figure 4.34. Iota Phi Theta, Warbler (1988). This image shows members of Iota Phi Theta Fraternity Inc.



Figure 4.35. Kappa Alpha Psi, Warbler (1988). This image shows members of Kappa Alpha Psi Fraternity Inc.



Figure 4.36. Omega Psi Phi, Warbler (1988). This image shows members of Omega Psi Phi Fraternity Inc.



Figure 4.37. Phi Beta Sigma, Warbler (1988). This image shows members of Phi Beta Sigma Fraternity Inc.



Figure 4.38. Alpha Phi Alpha, Warbler (1989). This image shows members of Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity Inc.



Figure 4.39. Iota Phi Theta, Warbler (1989). This image shows members of Iota Phi Theta Inc.



Figure 4.40. Omega Psi Phi, Warbler (1989). This image shows members of Omega Psi Phi Fraternity Inc.



Figure 4.41. Alpha Phi Alpha, Warbler (1990). This image shows members of Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity Inc.



Figure 4.42: Phi Beta Sigma, Warbler (1990). This image shows members of Phi Beta Sigma Fraternity Inc.



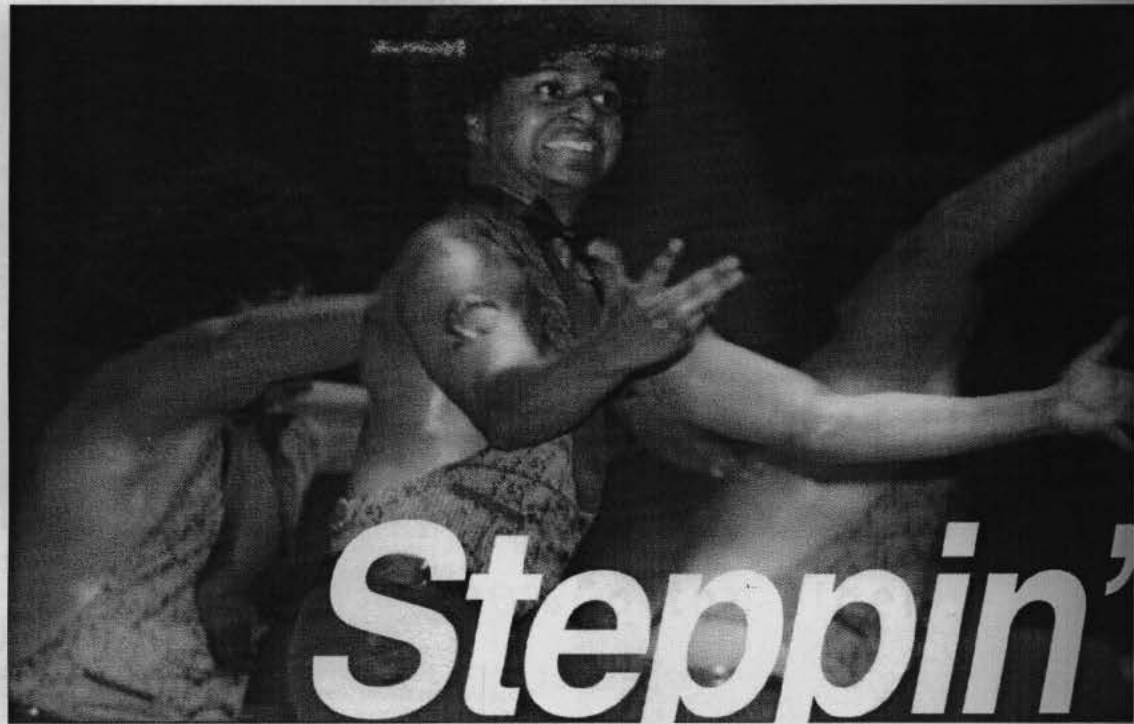
Figure 4.43. National Pan-Hellenic Council, Warbler (1990). This image shows members of National Pan-Hellenic.



Figure 4.44. Kappas and Ques Step Show, Warbler (1994). This image shows members of Kappa Alpha Psi Fraternity-Inc. and Omega Psi Phi Fraternity Inc. participating in a step show.



Figure 4.45. Kappa Alpha Psi, Warbler (1994). This image shows members of Kappa Alpha Psi Fraternity Inc.



LONDON FULLER/STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

Black Greek Council
celebrates 88 years
of tradition

Steppin' withsoul

A diverse crowd of more than 500 turned out to support the Black Greek Council's annual Step Show Oct. 7.

Retlecting the long history of the Step Show at Eastern, this year's theme was "Steppin with Soul - 88 Years of Tradition."

The master and mistress of ceremonies, Marty "Kool-Aid" Thompson and Roshunda Gilmore, began the show by "roll calling" each fraternity and sorority that competed in the show as well as those in the audience.

Omega Psi Phi fraternity and Zeta Phi Beta sorority took top honors in the show.

"Everyone did well," said Omega Psi Phi President Demetrius Lane of his fraternity's retro-60s/70s performance. "There was a nice crowd and competition was high."

"There was a nice crowd and competition was high."

Demetrius Lane,
Omega Psi Phi president

Both winners received a first-place trophy, individual traveling trophies and \$200.

Each group of participants demonstrated its unique style by its choice of clothing, music and steps.

"There was an improvement over

previous years as far as behind the scenes," said Tosha Johnson, president of Delta Sigma Theta sorority, second place finishers in the competition. "Everything seemed to be thought out more, which made the show a success."

The Greeks that participated in the show were: Alpha Phi Alpha, Delta Sigma Theta, Kappa Alpha Psi, Omega Psi Phi, Phi Beta Sigma, Sigma Gamma Rho and Zeta Phi Beta.

BY ROBIN S. WILLIAMS
ORGANIZATIONS/PORTRAITS EDITOR

ABOVE: Wearing afro wigs, Corey [name] and members of Omega Psi Phi fraternity give the audience a taste of the wild side at the 88th annual Black GI'Nk Council Step Show. They finished first among the fraternities.

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Figure 4.46. Steppin' With Soul, Warbler (1995). This image shows members of Omega Psi Phi Fraternity Inc. stepping in the Black Greek Council Step Show.



Figure 4.47. Alpha Phi Alpha, Warbler (1995). This image shows members of Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity Inc.



Figure 4.48. Omega Psi Phi, Warbler (1995). This image shows members of Omega Psi Phi Fraternity Inc.



Figure 4.49. Alphas Stepping, Warbler (1996). This image shows members of Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity stepping.



Figure 4.50. Phi Beta Si_gm a Stepping, Warbler (1996). This image shows members of Phi Beta Si_gm a stepping



Figure 4.51. Phi Beta Si_gm a, Warbler (1996). This image shows members of Phi Beta Si_gm a.



Figure 4.52. Alpha PhiAlpha, Warbler (2003). This image shows members of Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity Incorporated.



Figure 4.53. Alpha Phi Alpha, Warbler (2007). This image shows members of Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity Incorporated.



Figure 4.54. Phi Beta Sigma, Warbler (2007). This image shows members of Phi Beta Sigma Fraternity Incorporated.



Figure 4.55. National Pan-Hellenic Council Men, Warbler (2007). This image shows the male members of the National Pan-Hellenic Council.



Figure 4.56. National Pan-Hellenic Council, Warbler (2009). This image shows members of the National Pan-Hellenic Council.



Figure 4.57. Alpha Phi Alpha, Warbler (2009). This image shows members of Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity Incorporated.



Figure 4.58. Alpha Phi Alpha, Warbler (2009). This image shows members of Phi Beta Sigma Fraternity Incorporated.



Figure 4.59. Kappa Alpha Psi, Warbler (2009). This image shows members of Kappa Alpha Psi Fraternity Incorporated.



Figure 4.60. National Pan-Hellenic Council, Warbler (2010). This image shows members of the National Pan-Hellenic Council



Figure 4.61. Alpha Phi Alpha, Warbler (2010). This image shows members of Alpha Phi Alpha Incorporated.



Figure 4.62. Kappa Alpha Psi, Warbler (2010). This image shows members of Kappa Alpha Psi Fraternity Incorporated.

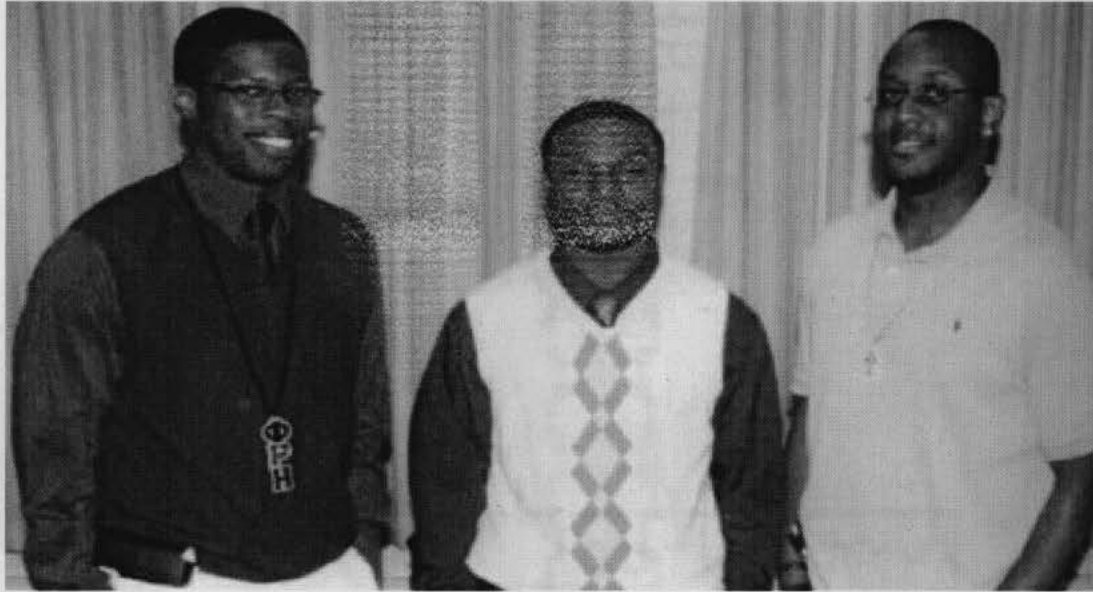


Figure 4.63. Phi Rho Eta, Warbler (2010). This image shows members of Phi Rho Eta Fraternity Incorporated.



Figure 4.64. Kappa Alpha Psi, Warbler (2011). This image shows members of Kappa Alpha Psi Fraternity.



Figure 4.65. Phi Rho Eta, Warbler (2011). This image shows members of Phi Rho Eta Fraternity Incorporated.



Figure 4.66. National Pan-Hellenic Council, Warbler (2011). This image shows members of the National Pan-Hellenic Council.



Figure 4.67. National Pan-Hellenic Council, Warbler (2012). This Image shows members of Kappa Alpha Psi Fraternity Incorporated.

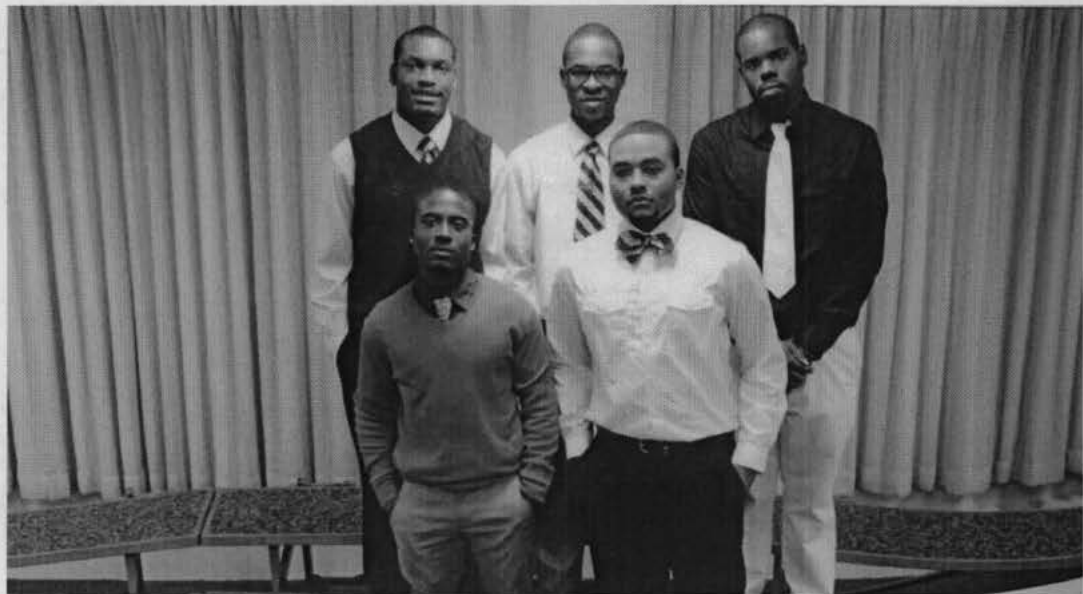


Figure 4.68. Phi Rho Eta, Warbler (2012). This image shows members of Phi Rho Eta Fraternity Incorporated.

Programming



Figure 4.69. Bill Cosby; Warbler (1969). This image shows comedian Bill Cosby performing at the university.



Figure 4.70. *A Raisin in the Sun*, Warbler (1963). This show African American male students performing in a production of *A Raisin in the Sun*.



Figure 4. 71. Dick Gregory, Warbler (1969). This image shows comedian, writer and Civil Rights activist Dick Gregory speaking to a group of students.

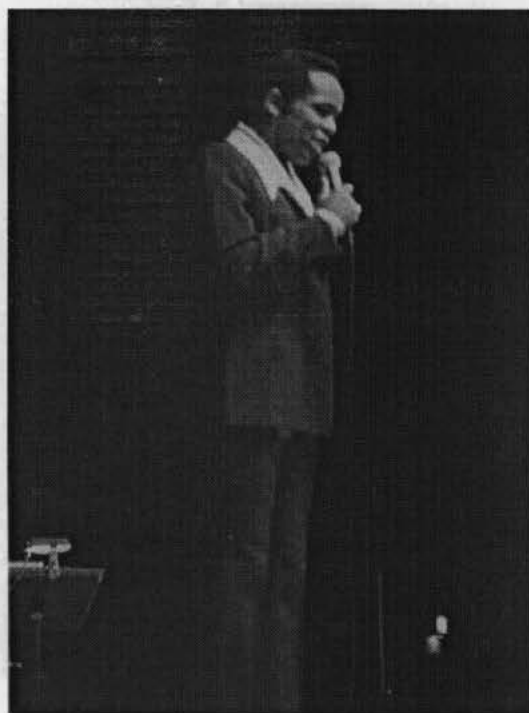


Figure 4. 72. Lou Rawls, Warbler (1969). This image shows singer Lou Rawls performing for homecoming.



Figure 4. 73. Friends of Distinction, Warbler (1969). This image shows members of the band Friends of Distinction as they perform for students.

Carmichael? Is capitalism

by Denis Brown

The All African People's Party, organized by and for African, all over the world, calls for Pan-Africanism--the total liberation and unification of Africa in a "scientifically social situation."

The party and its concept are the brainchild of 60's revolutionary, Stokely Carmichael.

Carmichael, in an almost impromptu visit to Eastern Oct. 4, packed the Old Grand Ballroom of the University Union and even had some enthusiastic listeners standing along the walls, sitting on the floors and perched on tables.

During the speech, Carmichael explained his aim was "the total destruction of the American capitalist system. It is only when the capitalist government is overthrown that all African people will be free."

"It is because of the struggles during slavery that Africans endured for so long that I say the only African who would support the capitalist form of government is a stupid, uniformed African," Carmichael said. Carmichael considers all blacks to be Africans.

"Any African supporting this type of government knows nothing of the government and even less about himself," he added.

Carmichael told the crowd he is disgusted with the way white America has "severely brainwashed" African children. He added that blacks, just by considering themselves blacks or Afro-Americans, are forgetting where they came from.

Blacks have come from being called "niggers, to niggers to colorads, to Negroes, to Afro-American, and to blacks, when the only name - all should have is Africans."

"American students, knowing little of the capitalist system, are trained from kindergarten to live in its competitive system. By the time



Stokely Carmichael, former and present revolutionary, discusses his views with the press.

the American student reaches college, the only thing on his mind is coming out of college making money, therefore, ripping people off. While the student is busy teaming to rip other people off, he is being ripped off by the university," Carmichael said.

Carmichael also said that the capitalist system is vicious, stupid and backward, but until Americans learn more about their system, they cannot fight it. One of the basic inequalities of capitalism is that men must exploit man for the system to work.

He concluded his speech by saying that he thought one of the main quirks of capitalism is that "those who do not labor are the ones who enjoy the fruits of others' labor, whereas, those who do all the hard labor may never enjoy the fruits of their own hard work."

The lecture ended with a long standing ovation. The Afro-American Studies Department, which sponsored that speech, must have been pleased at the turnout and the response. A question and answer session followed the speech in which Carmichael defended his viewpoint and made that point of his question.



Carmichael speaks to a reporter.

Figure 4.74.- Stokely Carmichael, Warbler (1977). This image shows an article which was featured in the yearbook about Black Panther and revolutionary Stokely Carmichael.



Figure 4. 75. Count Basie, Warbler (1979). This image shows Jazz legend Count Basie and his orchestra as they bow after a performance on campus.



Figure 4. 76. Gridders grab national title, Warbler (1979). This image shows a football player celebrating as he scores a touchdown for the national title.

A message to Eastern's black students

Get involved-the system needs you

For black students who have considered transferring when football, basketball and partying weren't enough-listen up.

There are so many other activities out there for you to enjoy, and since you're already paying for the right to participate, why not?

The theater arts department stages mini-productions every Thursday during the semester at 5 o'clock-and you don't have to be a theater major to try out.

They also sponsor two major stage productions each semester, and anyone with acting ability is welcome to try out. There have been too few blacks in these presentations, and you can't be shy about performing because some frat or another "gets off" just about every weekend.

So try out for a part you like, and, as they say in the theater, "break a leg!"

And for those sisters and brothers who play musical instruments, why not join some of the bands offered through the music department? They offer bands from pep to jazz to symphony, so get out there and make some noise.

The music department offers four vocal groups including the Chamber and Cecilian Singers, Mixed Chorus and the Concert Choir. But if you like the kind of music that lifts your spirits and makes you rock in your seat, join the Unity Gospel Choir for soulful singing and playing. If the robe fits, wear it.

For you who like rapping on the intellectual level, get involved with Eastern's intercollegiate speech and debate teams.

Or if you like broadcasting (all you Friday and Saturday night ers), trip out with the WELH broadcasting staff and get practical experience at the same time. Any full-time student, regardless of major, is eligible.

There can't possibly be a shortage of creativity and writing talent among blacks at Eastern-not the way we play the dozen and put each other down. If that ability could be used to say something meaningful to blacks, something that would help them rather than make them feel bad, then the *Communicator*, a magazine published specifically for blacks by black students, might be revived. But, in the meantime, what would be the harm in submitting material to Eastern's creative magazine, the *Vehicle*?

Journalism enthusiasts are encouraged to report for the Eastern News. If you enjoy finding out what's going on and learning how to deal with the man on his level, it's not bad experience.

And how many blacks do you know in student government?



Miss Black EIU Audrey Hawkins holds her position in the community "Y honor..."

Still haven't found your special interest?

Well, in addition to these, there are various social organizations on campus to promote unity, and there are also academic organizations which help get you where you want to be in your particular field of study.

When things get rough and you think you "can't hang"-if you want to loosen up, let off steam or just tone up your muscles-jog on over to Lantz and exercise in one of the equipment rooms.

Many blacks are into individual ways of entertaining themselves, and why not? Why can't we get together in a private

room or apartment, or even at Ted's or Mothe's and have our own "four o'clock club?"

These suggestions are but a tip-off to the things black students could and should be doing at Eastern because it would take an entire yearbook to enumerate the many ways blacks could use their abundant talents and creativity.

So extend your talents and get involved.

I assure you that you will have a better handle on what's going on around you, and maybe fewer of us will be able to complain of boredom.

-DynaCol

132-Warbler '79

Figure 4.77. Get Involved- the system needs you, Warbler (1979). This image shows an article that appeared in the yearbook which discusses African American student involvement.

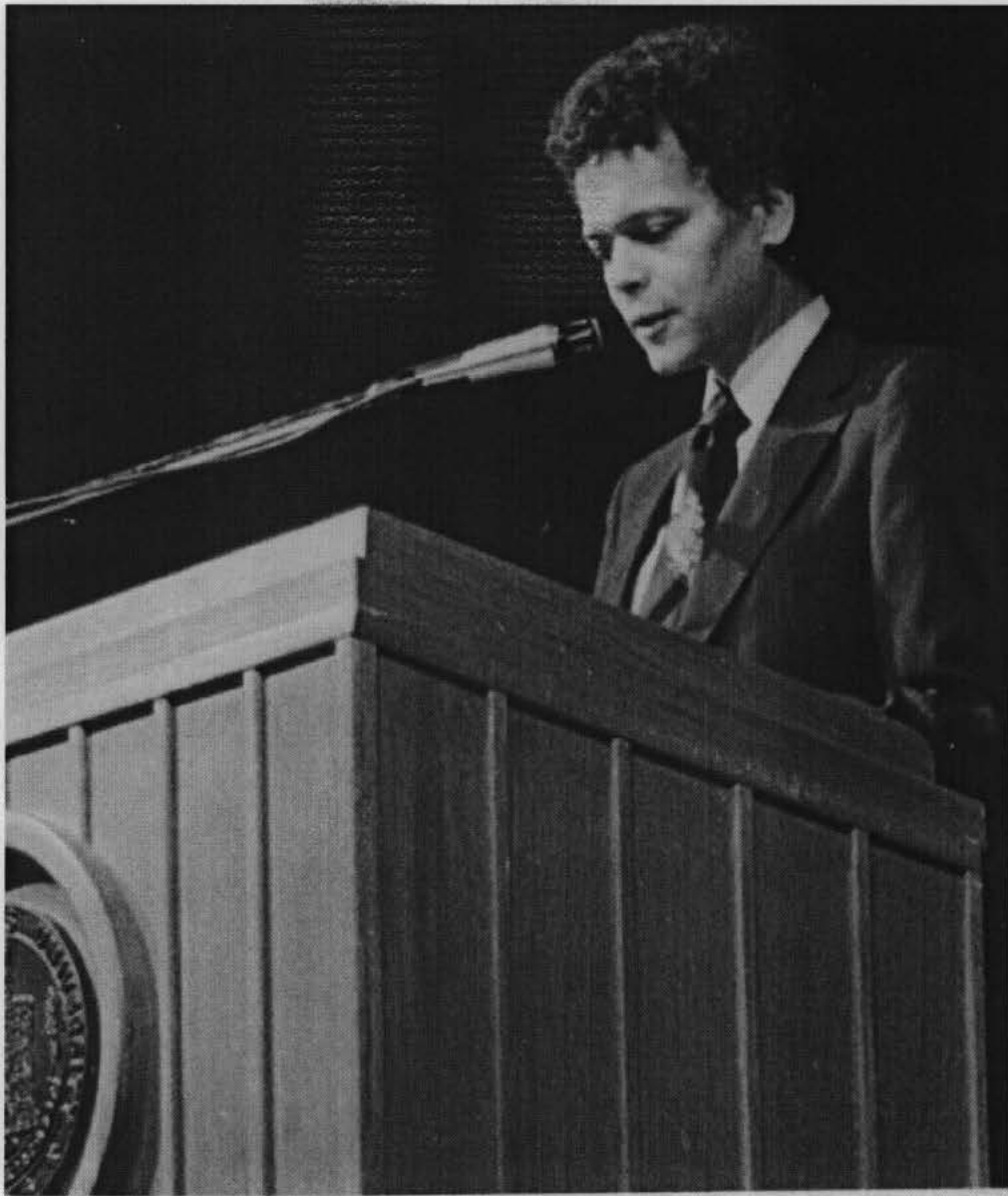


Figure 4. 78. Bond urges participation, Warbler (1980). This image shows civil rights activist Julian Bond as he urges African American students to become involved in civil rights.

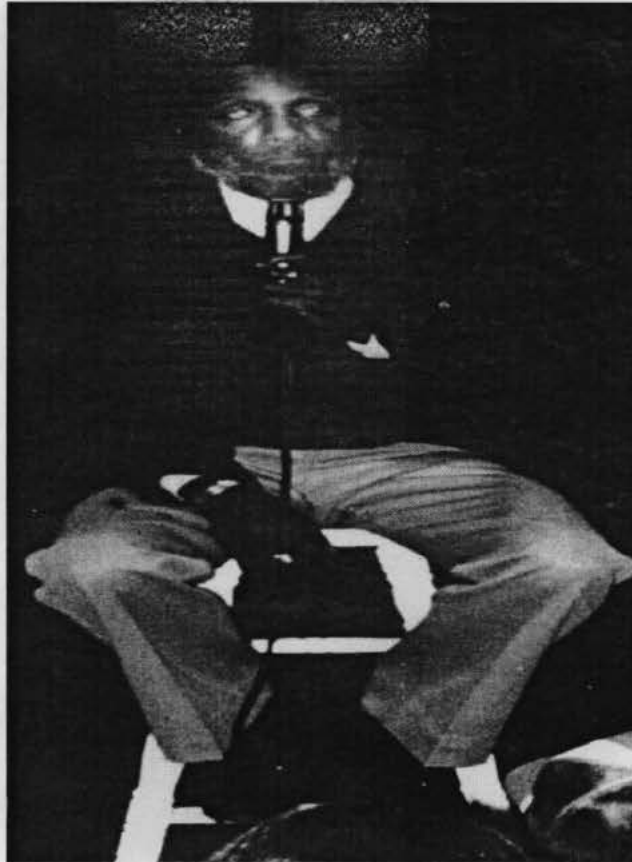


Figure 4.79. Comedian, activist, (Warbler 1983). This image shows comedian and activist Dick Gregory as he lectures to a group of students.



Figure 4.80. Nikki Giovanni, Warbler (1983). This image shows poet Nikki Giovanni as she performs for a group of students.



Figure 4.81. Jr. Walker and the all stars, Warbler (1983). This image shows Jr. Walker and the All Stars as they perform on campus.



Figure 4.82. One mo time, Warbler (1988). This image shows a black vaudeville troupe as they perform One Mo' Time on campus.



Figure 4.84. Magician, Warbler (1988). This image shows magician Charles Greene as he performs for students.



Figure 4.85. Accommodating Commodores, Warbler (1989). This image shows the Commodores as they perform on campus.

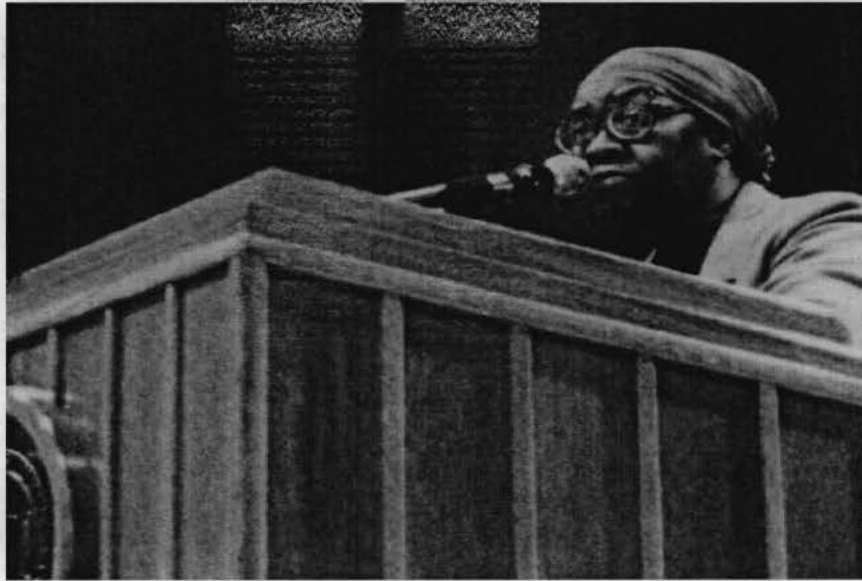


Figure 4.86. Laureate Inspires, Warbler (1990). This image shows Gwendolyn Brooks as she lectures to a group of students.



Figure 4.87. Endurance pays, Warbler (1990). This image shows house school principle Joe Clark as he lectures to students.



Figures 4.88. Smooth, Warbler (1996). This image shows recording artist smooth as she performs for students on campus.

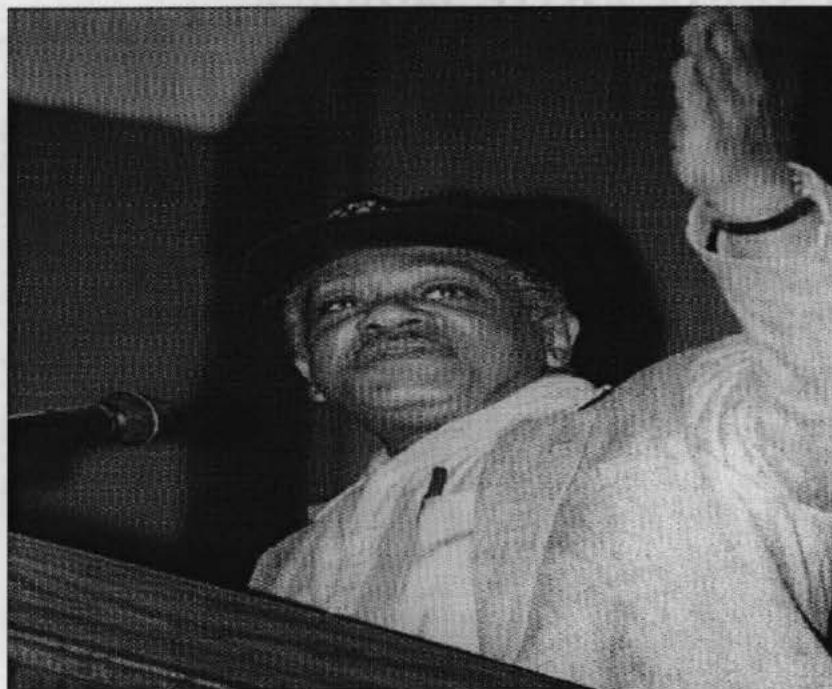


Figure 4.89. History of diversity Black Panther party Warbler (1996). This image shows Black Panther Party co-founder Bobby Seal as he lectures to a group of students.

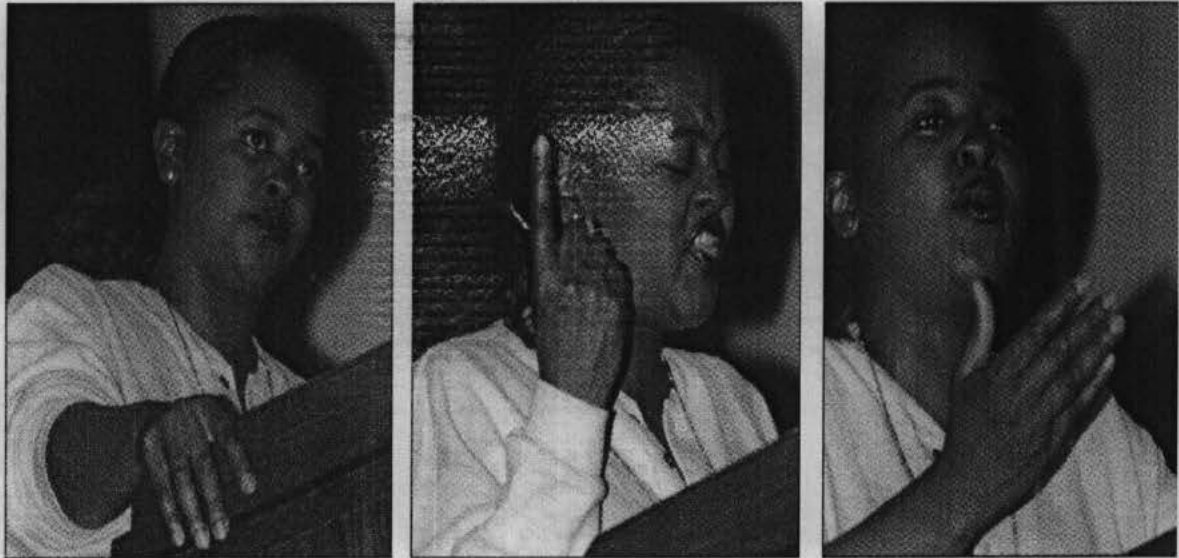


Figure 4.90. Soujah gives soulful knowledge, Warbler (1996). This image show Sister Soulj_ah as she speaks during Woman's History Month.



Figure 4.91. Comedian, Warbler (2009). This image shows a comedian performing for students at the university.

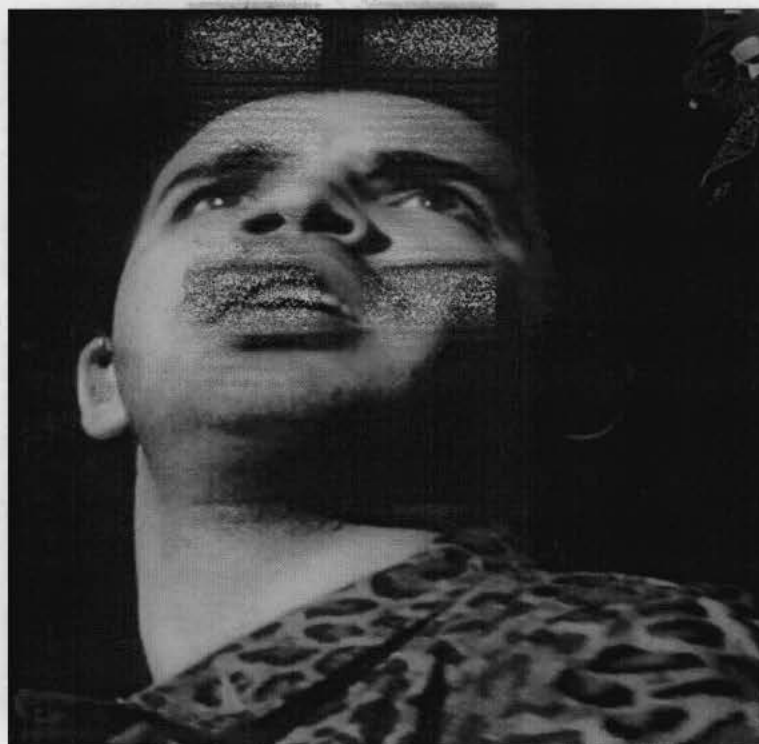


Figure 4.92. Drake, Warbler (2012). This image show rapper Aubrey "Drake" Graham during his performance in at the university.

Involvement



Figure 4.93. Young Democrats, Warbler (1960). This image shows an African American male involved in one of the few organizations on campus.

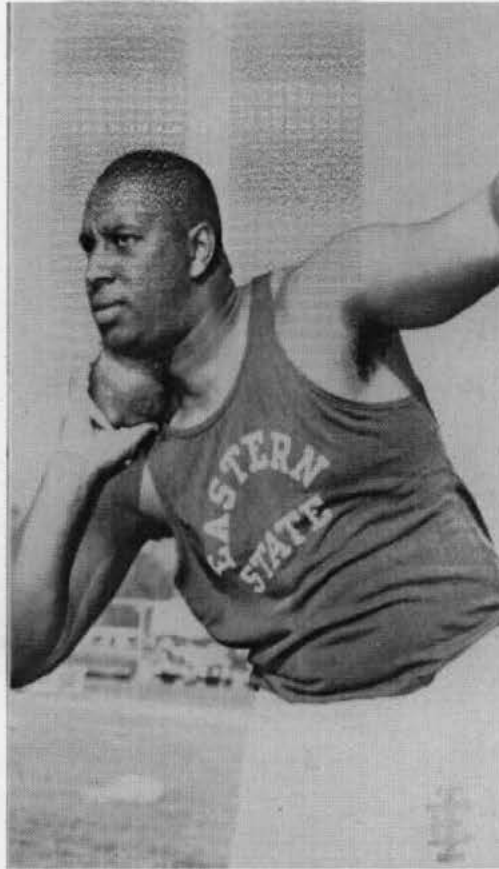


Figure 4.94. Track and Field, Warbler (1960). This image shows a African American male participating in track and field.



Figure 4.95. Music Education, Warbler (1961). This image shows an African American male in the music education program.



Figure 4.96. Gamma Theta Upsilon, Warbler (1961). This image shows an African American male how is a member of Gamma Theta Upsilon National Honorary Geography Fraternity.

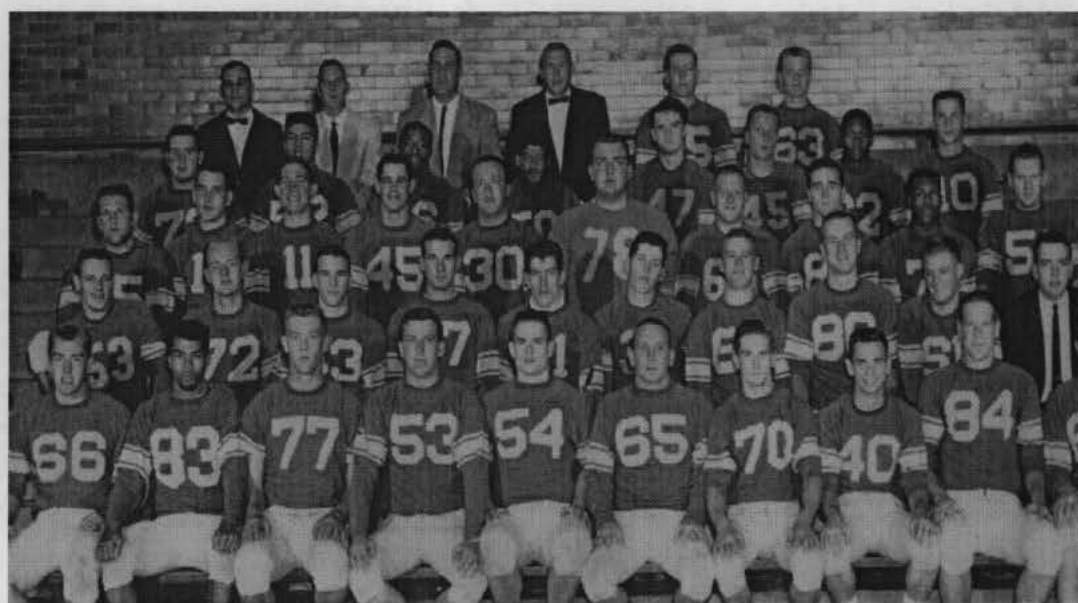


Figure 4.97. Easter Illinois University Football Team, Warbler (1961). This image shows four African American players on the football team.



Figure 4.98. Men's Glee Club, Warbler (1962). This image shows three African American men who were members of the Glee Club.

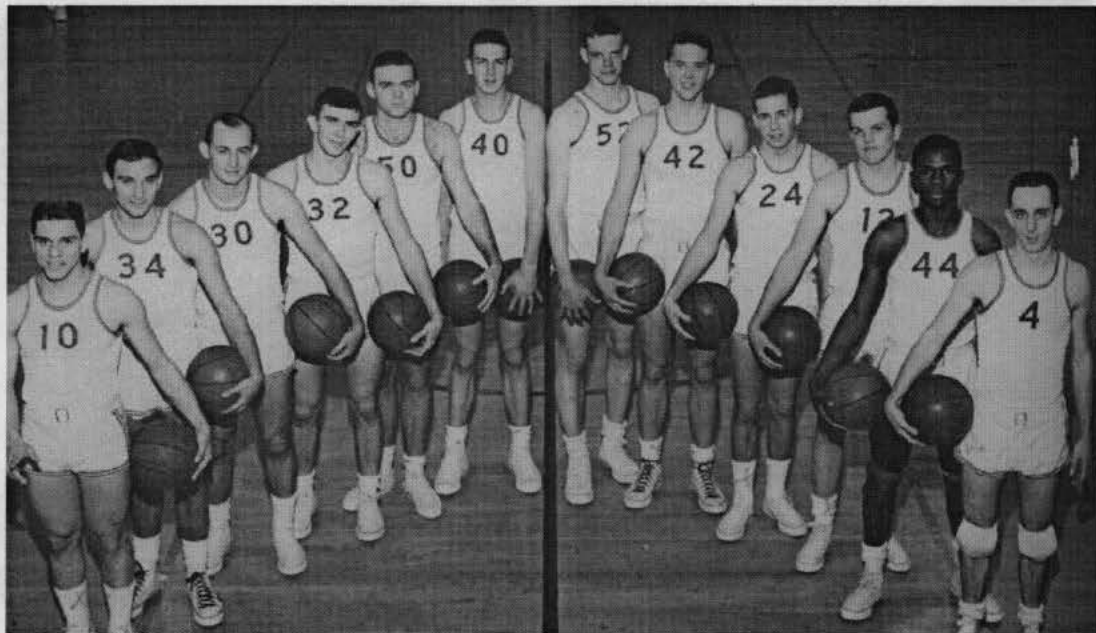


Figure 4.99. Freshman Sophomore Basketball Team, Warbler (1962). This image shows one African American on the freshman sophomore basketball team.



Figure 4.103. Gymnastics, Warbler (1963). This image shows one African American male involved in men's gymnastics.

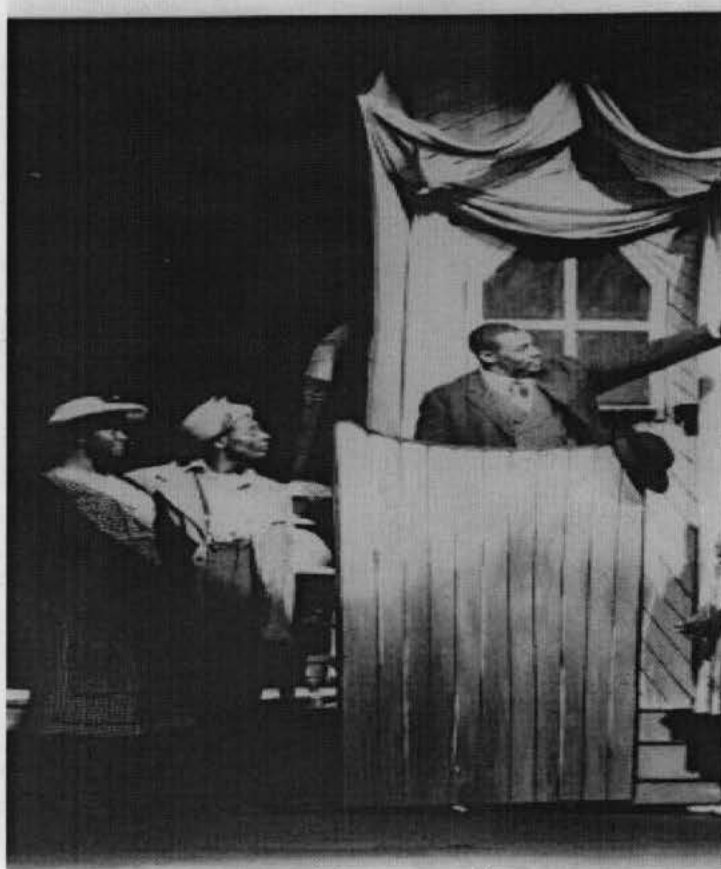


Figure 4.104. Purlie Victorious, Warbler (1963). This image shows an African American males performing in a reproduction of *Purlie Victorious*.



Figure 4.105. Oratory Club, Warbler (1964). This image shows an African American male who is a member of the Oratory Club.



Figure 4.106. Football, Warbler (1964). This image shows four African American football players and one African American football coach.



Figure 4.107. Council on Human Relations, Warbler (1964). This image shows student organization named Council-on Human Relations which has majority African American.



Figure 4.108. Casanovas, Warbler (1977). This image shows members of the social club The Casanovas.



Figure 4.109. Groove Phi Groove, *Warbler* (1977). This image shows members of the social club Groove Phi Groove.

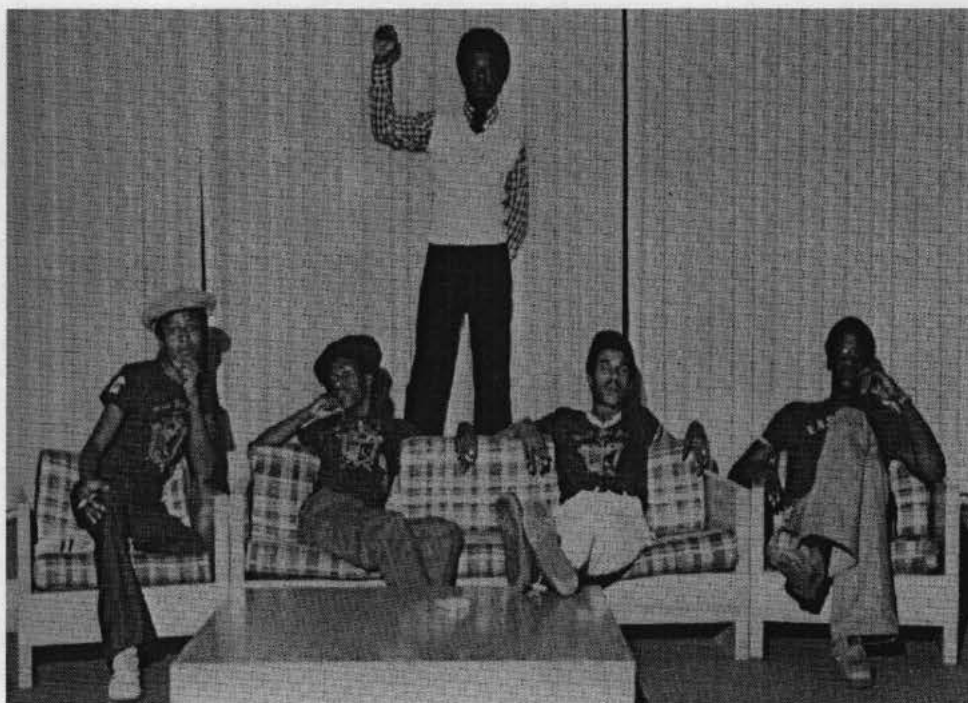


Figure 4.110. Wine Psi Phi, *Warbler* (1977). This image shows members of the social club Wine Psi Phi.



Figure 4.11i. Black Student Union, *Warbler* (1978). This image shows members of the Black Student Union.



Figure 4.112. -Unity Gospel Choir, *Warbler* (1978). This image shows members of the Unity Gospel Choir.



Figure 4.113. Unity Gospel Choir, Warbler (1978). This image shows members of the Unity Gospel Choir.



Figure 4.114. Black Student Union, Warbler (1980). This image shows members of the Black Student Union.



Figure 4.115. Unity Gospel Choir, Warbler (1980). This image shows members of the Unity Gospel Choir.



Figure 4.116. Black Student Union, Warbler (1980). This image shows members of the Black Student Union.



Figure 4.117. Black Student Union, Warbler (1982). This image shows members of the Black Student Union.



Figure 4.118. Black Student Union, Warbler (1984). This image shows members of the Black Student Union



Figure 4.119. Peer Helpers, Warbler (1989). This image shows members of Peer Helpers.



Figure 4.120. Unity Gospel Fellowship, Warbler (1989). This image shows members of the Unity Gospel Fellowship.



Figure 4.121. Black Student Union, *Warbler* (1994). This image shows members of the Black Student Union



Figure 4.122. NAACP, *Warbler* (2007). This image shows members of the student chapter of the NAACP.

Summary

This chapter has presented a summary of the findings of each semi-structured interview conducted to better understand the experiences of African American males on the campus of Eastern Illinois University over the past seven decades. It also includes the findings from the archival research conducted by the researcher. It has described the participants' experiences at the university and organized thematically for further analysis.

Figures 4.131 to 4.136 present timelines of selected experiences for each theme across the decades.

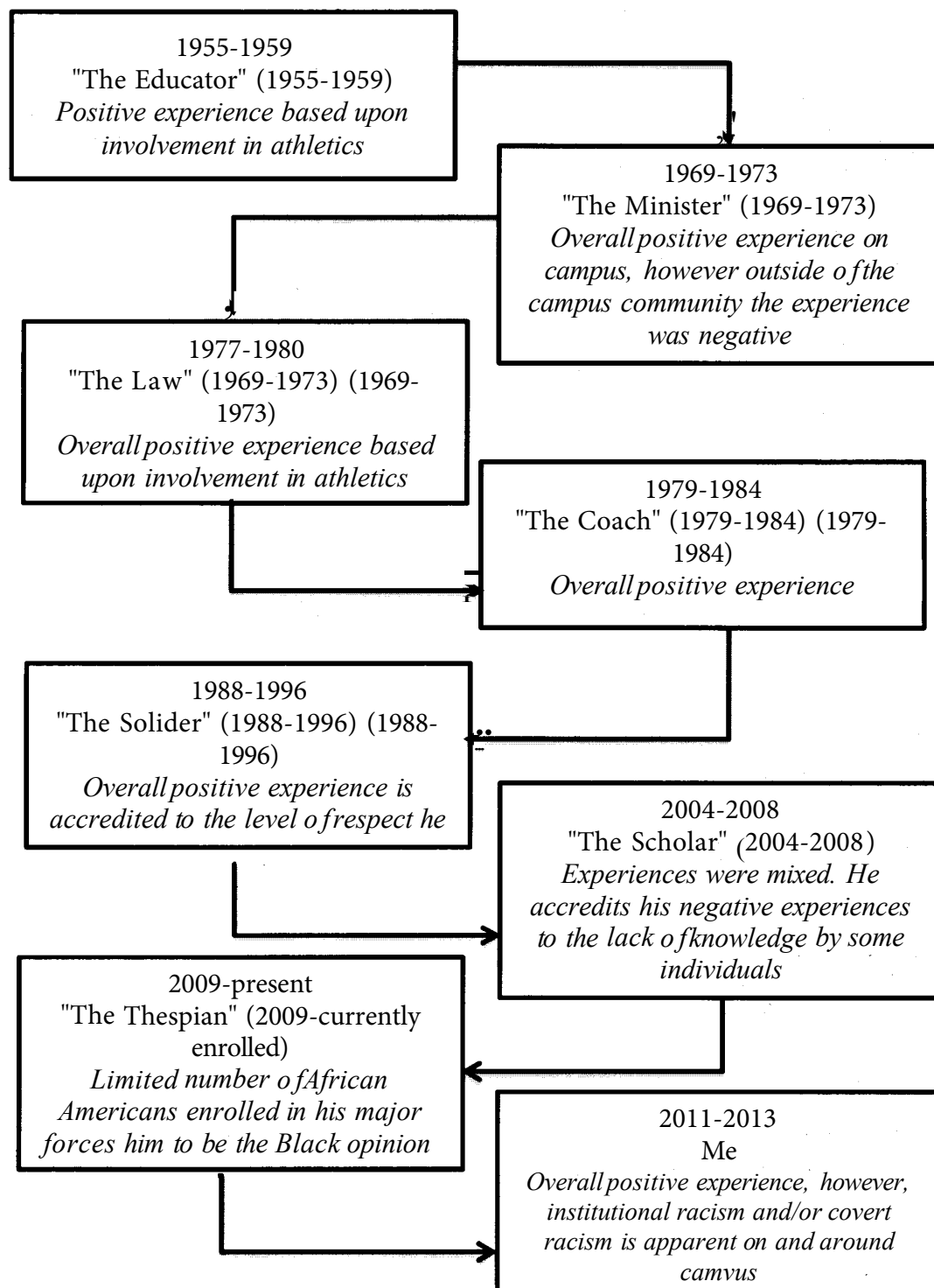


Figure 4.131. Time line of the African American Male Experience Involving Race Relations

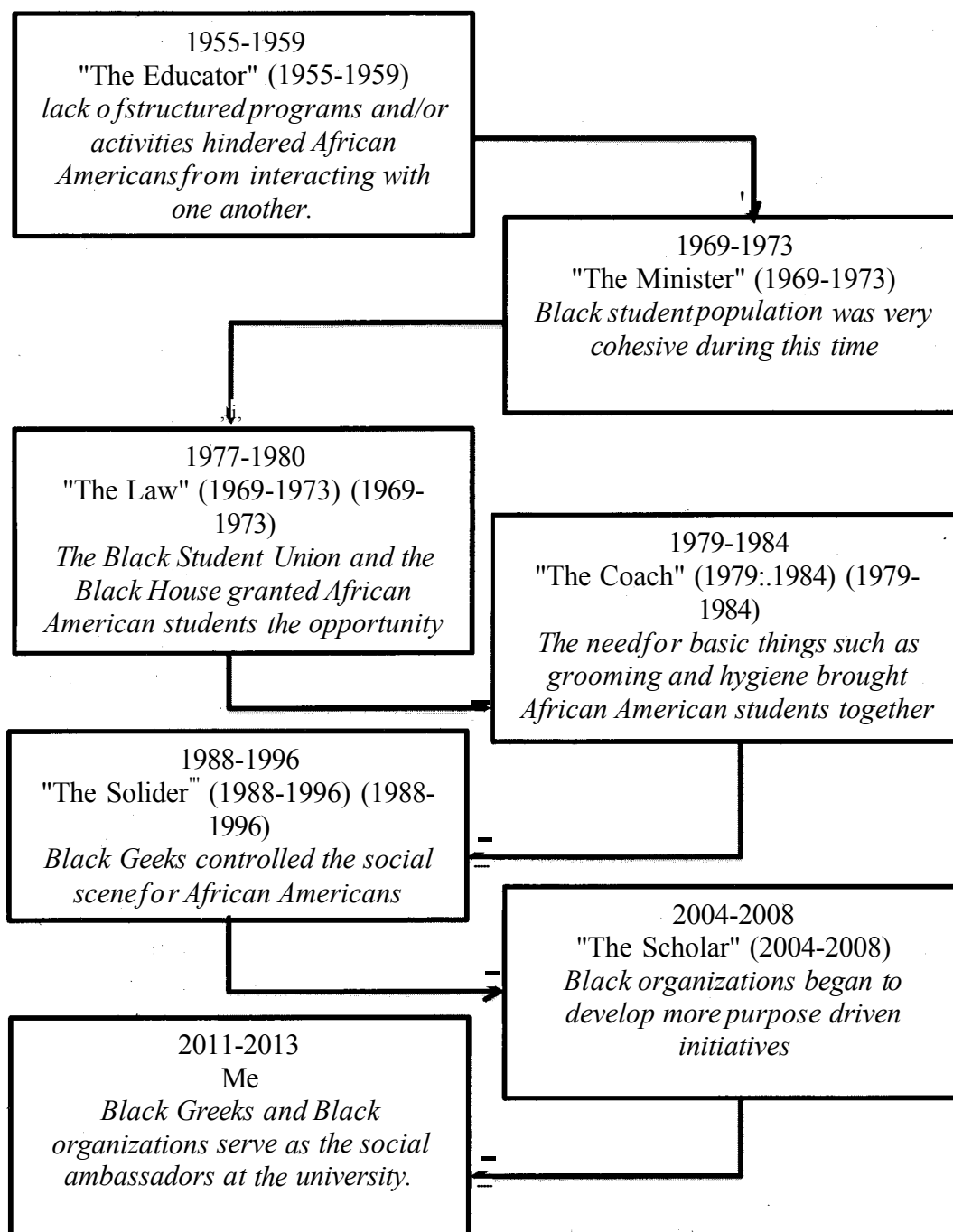


Figure 4. I32. Time line of the African American Male Experience Involving Intra-racial Interactions

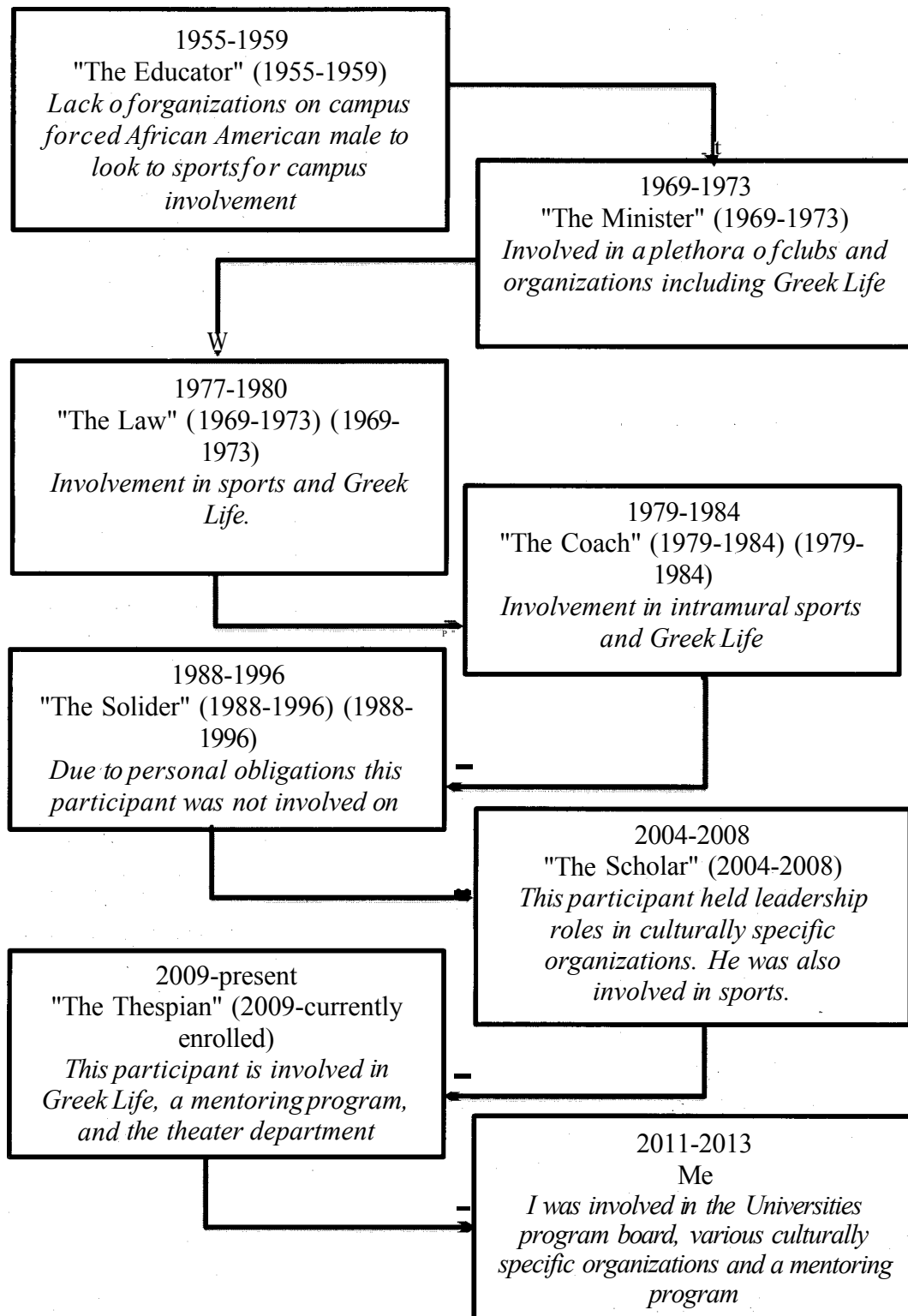


Figure 4.133. Time line of the African American Male Experience Involving Campus Involvement.

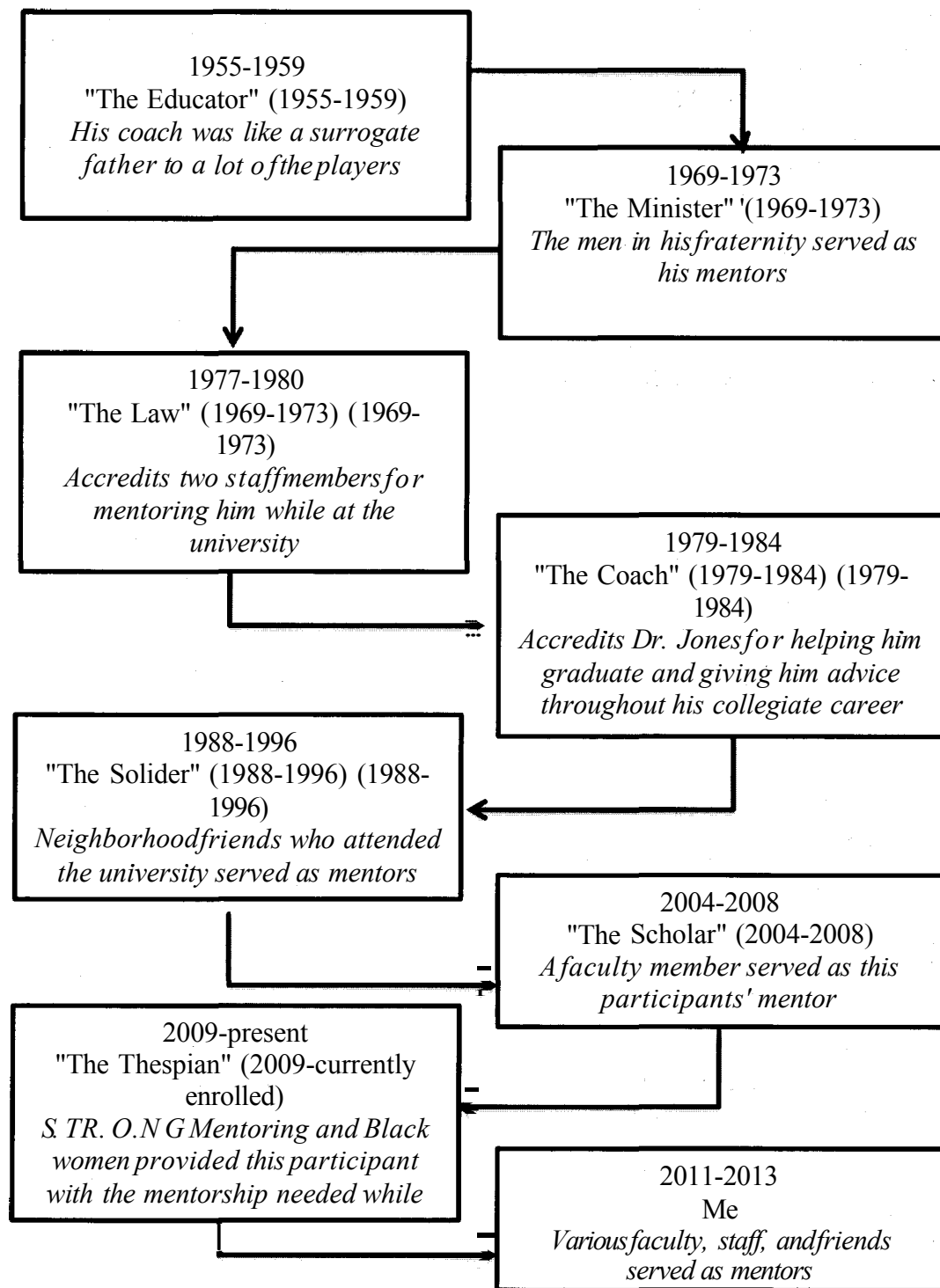


Figure 4.134. Time line of the African American Male Experience Involving Mentors

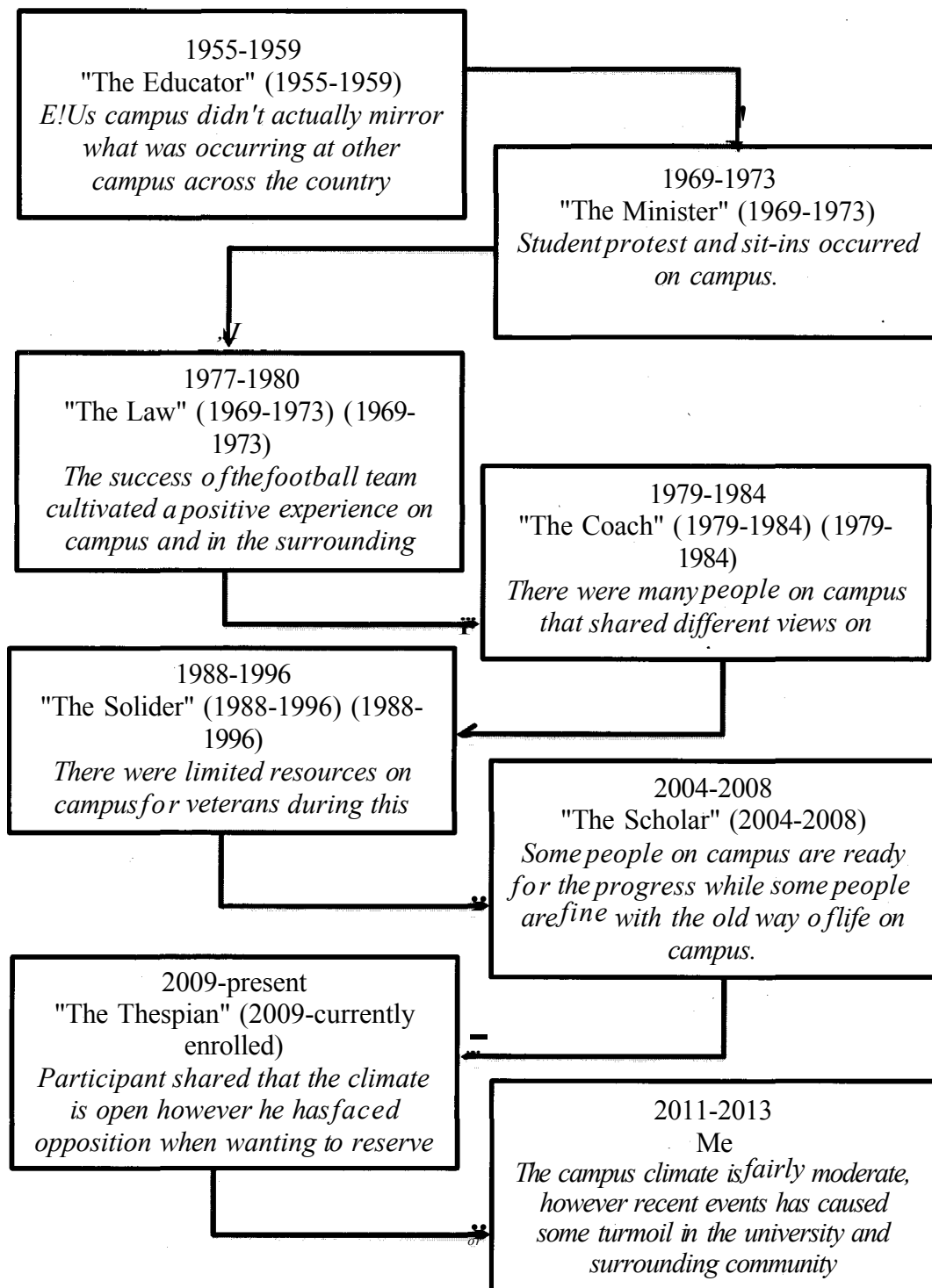


Figure 4.135. Time line of the African American Male Experience Involving Campus Climate.

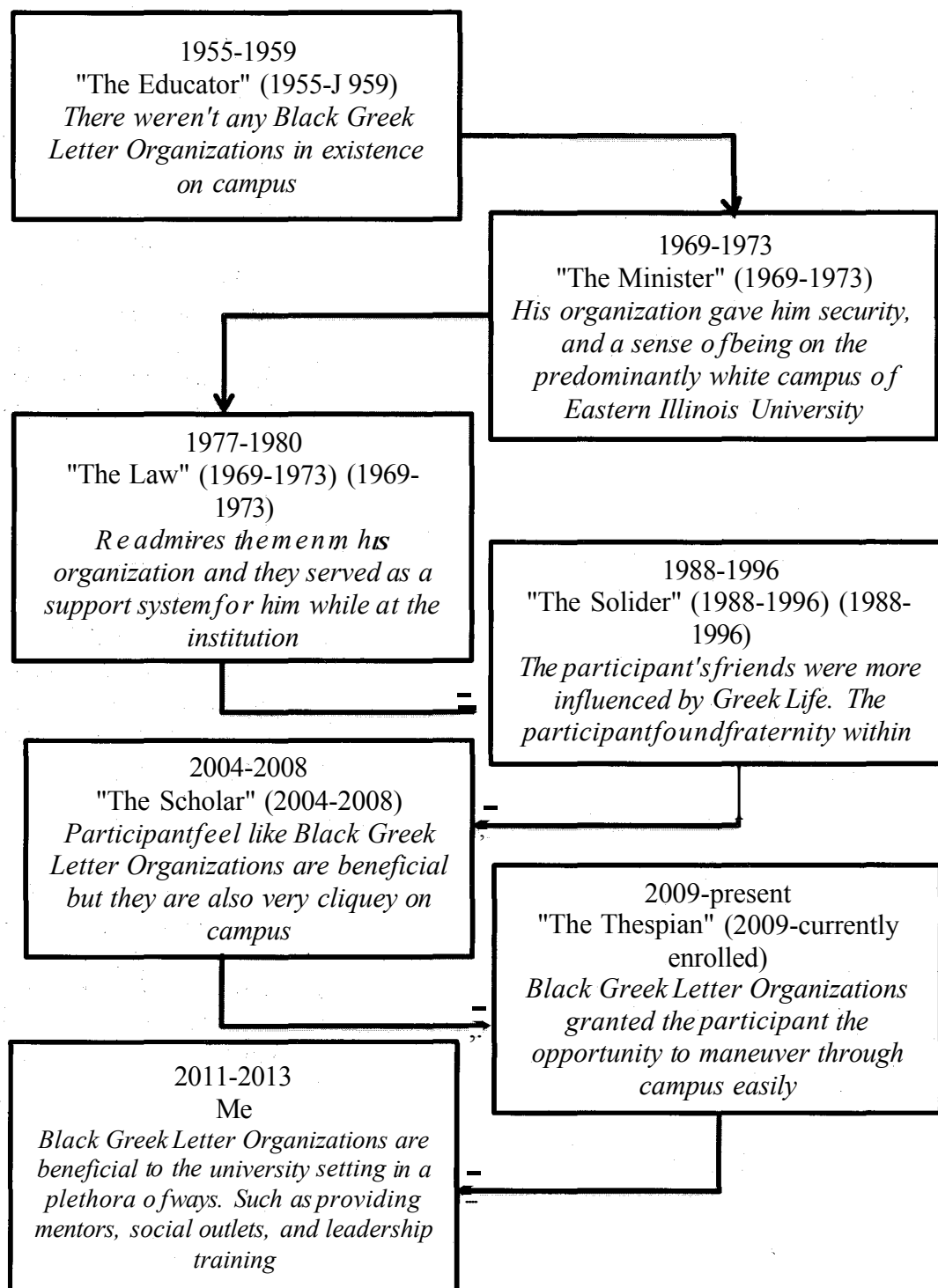


Figure 4.136. Time line of the African American Male Experience Involving Black Greek organizations.

CHAPTER V

Discussion, Conclusions and Recommendations

This study was conducted to understand the experiences of the African American male student at Eastern Illinois University over the past seven decades and to investigate how these experiences evolved. In this chapter I discuss the findings within the broader theoretical context, their implications for college student affairs professionals at Eastern Illinois University and beyond, and finally I conclude with recommendations for future research.

The African American Male Experience at Eastern Illinois University

I wanted to gain a clearer understanding of the African American male experience. I wanted to know how they experienced the campus over the last seven decades and how these experiences evolved overtime. One of the notable findings were that though some things have changed about these experiences of African American men at EIU; notably campus involvement, and the role of Black Greek-Letter organizations; the campus climate with regards to the broader community has only seen a slight changes (e.g. significance of mentoring relationships, campus involvement, and intra-cultural relations, White/Black student relations, student/faculty relations). After conducting content analysis of the interviews I determined that the participants had both positive and negative experiences at EIU. These can be organized into seven major themes: (i) experiences involving faculty or staff relations, (ii) race relations, (iii) intra-cultural relations, (iv) campus involvement, (v) mentoring relationships, (vi) campus climate, and (vii) Black Greek-letter organizations. In addition, several minor themes were implied or otherwise insinuated by the participants. These included (i) onlyness, (ii) lowered

expectations, (iii) positive influence of student organizations, and (iv) sense of care from mentors.

Two participants mentioned being the only Black male or one of the very few Black males in their classes. Harper (2012) refers to this as *onlyness* or "...a profound sense of pressure to be the spokesperson or ambassador for people of color in general and Black men in particular" (p. 15). "The Educator" (1955-1959) recalled how being the only Black man in one of his classes forced him to over achieve in order to defy the lowered expectations set by his Caucasian male professor who voiced that he had never had an African American student receive a grade higher than a C. "I can recall when a comment was made relative to expectations around my performance in a science class... I was the only Black in the class... I of course challenged him on that and proved him wrong." Harper (2012) reported similar experiences among his participants. He reported professors were surprised when the few African Americans in their class did well on assignment. This is because they initially had low expectations of the student, which is a condition of *onlyness*. Soloranzo, Ceja, and Yosso (2004) considers being invisible in class a trend associated with micro-aggression. The statement made by "The Educator" (1955-1959)'s professor could have affected the participant in two ways; (i) he could have submitted to the stereotypes presented by his instructor, or (ii) attempt to debunk the stereotype presented by his instructor (Soloranzo, Ceja, and Yosso (2004). While it is fortunate that he chose the more productive of the two choices Soloranzo, Ceja, and Yosso reported that many students fall into the predetermine mediocrity set by their instructors.

Another instance of onlyness appeared with "The Thespian" (2009-currently enrolled) . He articulated that he is typically the only African American male in his theatre classes. While in these classes, he is forced to act as the expert of everything pertaining to African Americans. When any issues pertaining to African Americans are brought up he is consistently referred to for the Black opinion. This added pressure forces African American students to teach their fellow classmates and instructors about the African American perspective (Willie, 2003). As a result of this, African American students can choose to react in either a positive or negative manner. ""The Thespian" (2009-currently enrolled), experienced the only_yn_ess effect even when it came to picking roles to play, "Even when people try to suggest a scene to you, race is consistently a factor." He continued "They come to you with a scene like the black guy and white girl. Or they try to pick a scene that's catered toward you." While one may consider this to be a form of accommodation, (Rush and Clark, 1971) "The Thespian" (2009-currently enrolled) elaborated by saying, "I don't care. I can play whatever. I can make the guy black." Harper (2012) expounds on how some of his participants dealt with onlyness and the stereotypes that come along with it. He mentioned, "...many became skilled at simultaneously embarrassing and educating their peers through the thoughtful act of calmly questioning their misconceptions." This was exemplified by ""The Thespian" (2009-currently enrolled), who resorts to clearing the air by approaching it jokingly, however if certain boundaries are crossed he will approach it in the latter manner:

"I clear the air and I make the jokes myself. You get some people who are comfortable making the joke like, "yea I see the resemblance". I feel like if you're

comfortable you're comfortable, if you're not or if you step over the line I'm going to check you and let you know."

I too have been a victim of the oneness spoke of by Harper (2012). Being a graduate student at EIU I've had to explain the Black perspective on many issues, particularly in courses that focus on multiculturalism and student developmental theory. While the participants in Harper's study look at this as a negative component of being African American at a PWI, I personally welcome inquiries on Black thought and African American culture. I see it as an opportunity to enlighten those who are curious about what it is like to be African American. On the other hand, as an undergraduate at this institution I rarely experienced oneness. This may be because my major in African American studies was comprised largely of other Blacks. While there were Caucasian students in those classes, they were only a few. However, although they were a minority, I don't recall us asking them for the White perspective on any of the issues discussed during those courses, even on issues pertaining to White privilege. Those students would volunteer their opinions; a notable difference.

Student organizations including Black Greek Letter Organizations appeared to be very influential in creating the African American experience at EIU. All participants except "The Educator" (1955-1959) and "The Solidarity" (1988-1996) were involved in culturally based student organizations. During the tenure of "The Educator" (1955-1959) there weren't any culturally based student organizations on the campus. Instead, his involvement revolved around his participation in football and tracks. The other participants mentioned that these organizations offered them a safe-haven and a family

like atmosphere that was important to their survival at the institution. Harper (2012) writes about this:

These clubs and organizations were also spaces where other students of color shared stories about racist experiences and collaboratively strategized ways to respond effectively to similar situations. Furthermore, these were also venues in which the participants' intellectual competence and sense of belonging were affirmed. Interacting meaningfully with other academically talented Black student leaders confirmed their individual and collective talents ... This proved useful when they encountered stereotypes and otherness in various spaces on campus, including classrooms" (p.15).

I too have found the comfort of culture based student organizations critical to my experience at EIU although my involvement came much later. Since I entered the institution, I have been involved in student organizations. One of these was University Board. This organization does programming and events for the student body. It wasn't until end of my senior year that I got heavily involved in culturally based student organizations. While in graduate school I've had the opportunity to work with the Black Graduate Student Association (BGSA) and S.T.R.O.N.G. Mentoring. Both of these organizations are focused on the development of the African American student at Eastern Illinois University. While serving as the Social Chairperson for BGSA, we held graduate school preparatory workshops for undergraduates interested in attaining a post bachelorette degree and provided social outlets for older students of color who attended EIU. S.T.R.O.N.G. Mentoring provides African American males with that safe space to

convene, discuss issues that important to us, and build one another up mentally and spiritually.

All of the participants expressed the significance of mentoring on their experience. Mentors ranged from football coaches, neighborhood friends and family members. "The Solider" (1988-1996) mentioned was inspired to attend college by a few men from his neighborhood who served as his support system while he was at the institution. "The Thespian" (2009-currently enrolled) was supported by a mentoring program which served as a support group for him. Five out of the seven participants shared that some of the university's faculty and staff served as mentors for them. Those participants who were/are involved in fraternities also look at their older fraternity brothers as mentors. Harper (2012) had similar findings. His participants' accredited mentors, community members, and family for sparking their interest in college and assisting them in their transition to college: "...most of the achievers' parents and family members more aggressively sought out educational resources to ensure their success... Black male student leaders also played an important role in helping the achievers transition smoothly to their colleges and universities..." (p.11).

Mentors have come in many forms for me while at Eastern Illinois University. They have ranged from White instructors to African American female staff. However, the most influential of my mentors have been my peers. The African American men that I surround myself with are exceptional gentlemen. Through their accomplishments I find inspiration. Ironically enough, we all serve as mentors in S.T.R.O.N.G. as well. The influence that we have on those young men is incredible. During my tenure with the

group I have noticed a dramatic change in how they interact with one another, the mentors, and other people in the campus community.

The Ecological Systems Perspective

One way in which the experiences of African American males on at EIU can be examined is through an ecological systems perspective. Bronfenbrenner's Ecological Systems Theory (1979) suggests that an individual's development is effected by the environment in which they live with the level of impact being strongest within the environment the student interacts with most directly. The smallest and potentially the most impactful system is the microsystem. This includes the home, parents, teachers and peers. All of the participants discussed the impact that their microsystem had on developing them as African American men. For example, "The Educator" (1955-1959)" recalled his football coach taking a particular interest in him. This coach became a mentor to him and was looked at as a "surrogate father". Likewise, "The Coach" (1979-1984) mentioned being mentored by a female staff member at the university, and how she helped him graduate from college. The mentors that these two participants mentioned had an extraordinary impact on their lives. "The Solider" (1988-1996), had a parent who was extremely ill while he was enrolled at Eastern Illinois University. His parent's illness forced him to commute home on the weekends. This in return interfered with his level of involvement on campus.

Interactions between elements of the microsystem may also impact an individual's experiences. Every participant shared an instance that was congruent with the mesosystem segment featured in Bronfenbrenner's Ecological Systems Theory (1979). For example, "The Solider" (1988-1996) shared with me the impact that his

neighborhood friends had on him coming to college. He also stated how they help one another while they were at Eastern. Without his neighborhood friends assisting him and attending the same university, his experience could have been extremely different. "The Coach" (1979-1984) relationship with his Caucasian roommate how came to his defense also impacted his experience at the university.

Some of the participant's stories were congruent with Bronfenbrenner's Ecological Systems Theory. For example, "The Minister" (1969-1973) recalled how his growing up on the South Side of Chicago, which housed predominantly black institutions, impacted how he interacted with Caucasian faculty once at Eastern Illinois University.

Every participant shared stories that correlate with macrosystem portion of the Ecological System Theory. All of the participants from Chicago and surrounding areas mentioned the difference in the cultures between their native city and Charleston, Illinois. "The Coach" (1979-1984) discussed how the Charleston community didn't have things such as Black barbershops or hair salons. These things are considered important staples in Black culture (Rooks, 1996). On the other hand, "The Educator" (1955-1959) and "The Solider" (1988-1996) didn't mention many differences between their native city and Charleston, Illinois.

The concept of Bronfenbrenner's chronosystem is very apparent in this study. The plight of the African American male at Eastern Illinois University is an example of this. African American male enrollment into the institution has increased over seven decades. "The Law" (1969-1973) mentioned that there were "500 African Americans" on campus during the time he was enrolled at EIU. There were 1,580 African American students

enrolled during the fall semester of 2012 (eiu.edu, 2012). Due to the increase number of African American students on campus, services and student organizations dedicated to this particular demographic has increased. These services and organizations helps African American students cope with the issues that come along with being African American at aPWI.

The Critical Race Theory Perspective

Another theory which provides a valuable lens for viewing the experiences of Black males at EIU is Critical Race Theory. Critical race theory (CRT) is based upon the intersection between race, socioeconomic status and law (Ladon-Billings & Tate, 1995). CRT suggests that racism and white supremacy are inherent in American society (Delgado & Stefancic, 2006). Instances of CRT are dispersed throughout the stories told by the participants. For example, "The Educator" (1955-1959) recalled a time when he was prohibited from entering a restaurant with the rest of his teammates due to his race. From the CRT perspective race is a product of social thought used to control when convenient (Delgado & Stefancic). Whoever dismissed "The Educator" (1955-1959) from the restaurant could have allowed him to eat. However, CRT explains that racism is something that people choose to utilize and whomever refused him service chose to be racist (Ladson-Billings and Tate, 1995).

One could also argue that "onlyness" as described by Harper (2011) is linkable to CRT. The "social construction" theme in CRT suggest that race is the by-products of social thoughts and relations and that African Americans are viewed to be homogeneous (Delgado & Stefancic, 2001). For example, when "The Thespian" (2009-currently enrolled) mentions being the only African American in his theater classes and constantly

being referred for the Black opinion; he is speaking about the effects that CRT has on him as the only Black in those courses.

I attempting to not focus on the racism that occurred at Eastern Illinois University, but it was inevitable. Whether it came in the form of blatant racism or subtle micro-aggressions the African American male experience at Eastern Illinois University carried along with it stories of racism. According to CRT this is not a surprise. Derrick Bell, one of the known founders of CRT even argues that the Brown v. Board of Education (1954) and other victories of the civil rights movement came to fruition because of the self-interest of America's white elitist (Delgado and Stefancic, 2011). CRT suggest that racism is woven into the very fabric of American society (Delgado & Stefancic, 2006). With that being said, one could argue that racism is everywhere including colleges and universities.

Limitations

Several limitations appeared while conducting this study. Those limitations lie within the lack of experience I have conducting qualitative research; financing the research as a student; and access to specific information.

Due to my lack of experience conducting qualitative research, I was limited in the number of ways that I could approach this study. I had an idea of what I wanted the study to entail, however I didn't know the exact steps to take to produce a sufficient study. To combat this I had regular meetings with my thesis advisor. She supplied me with readings which included: textbooks, journals, and other graduate thesis and dissertations. These readings helped me develop the theoretical framework as well as the structure of my study. I also found and read various texts to strengthen my research. While some of the

text I acquired was extracted from the internet, the majority of it was found in the library at Eastern Illinois University.

Financing the research also proved to be one of my limitations. With the participants dispersed throughout Illinois, I had to develop a travel plan that was inexpensive. I arranged all of the interviews at locations that didn't require a rental fee, for using their facilities. These locations turned out to be public libraries, participant's homes and offices, and rooms at Eastern Illinois University that didn't charge a rental fee. I also scheduled all out of town interviews around the same time to prevent me from having to travel to the Chicago area multiple times. Instead of purchasing a video recorder, I rented it from the technology lab on the campus of Eastern Illinois University free of charge. There is an allotted time limit one can have equipment checked out from the technology lab, so I acquired a letter from one of my thesis committee members which allowed me to rent it from a longer amount of time.

The limitation I encountered was connecting the personal accounts of the participants to the information discovered in the archival findings. For example, "The Minister" (1969-1973) shared stories of the black student movement that occurred on campus. He also elaborated on sit-ins and rallies; however this was not depicted in the Daily Eastern News or the Warbler. Some research poses that a participant's age can tarnish their credibility (Koch and Harrington, 1998). I disagree in the case of my participants and other minorities who participate in historical based research relevant to their culture on the basis that over time, history has been systematically reconstructed and even erased (De la Mothe, 1997; Swinton, 2012). For example, in 2010 Texas' School Board attempted to erase the mention of the word slavery and refer to the "trans-Atlantic

Slave Trade" as the "Atlantic Triangular trade" in the state's history books (Monroe, 2010). Even in documentaries; a genre of film used as a source of historical reference; history can be presented in a bias fashion in order to accomplish the filmmaker's agenda (Rabinowitz, 1993). Given these points, I conclude that the universities publications did not properly recount the experience of African Americans. I did, discover a mention of minority student ran publications during the 1970s, however, I was unable to access the documents. Unlike the Daily Eastern News, a student ran publication that is easily accessible via micro film, hardcopy, and online database.

Methodological Limitations

The limitations of this study are in the area of the quality of my sample, lack of available data, and self-reported data. Since the researcher doesn't know the participants personally, there is an uncertainty in the quality of the participant in regards to them sharing their lived experiences while they were students at the university. Since some of the participants were enrolled at the university nearly 50 years ago some of the details needed for the study may not be able to be recalled. There may also be a lack of sufficient data to effectively explore the collegiate experiences of African American men on the university's campus. For instance, information regarding student organizations started by African American students may not be available along with accounts of less publicized events that may have affected the collegiate experience of African American men on the campus. Self-reported data also presents limitations to the current study. As stated by Heppner, Wampold and Kivlighan (2008), the disadvantages of self-reported data are: vulnerability to distortions (intentional or unintentional) by the participant;

participants unaware of the characteristics being measured; congruence between a phenomenological perspective and self-reports (p. 335)."

It is fairly easy for one to get a distorted understanding of what is being asked of them as a participant in a study. Participants may have distorted view of what the hypothesis of the study is and may respond in a plethora of ways: "(1) they think will confirm the researcher's conjecture, (2) in a manner that makes them look good, (3) in a way that makes them appear more distressed that is truly the case in order to receive promised services, or (4) in a socially desirable way (p. 335)."

Limitations could arise out of the participant not being aware of the characteristics being measured. Heppner, Wampold and Kivlighan give the example of a test-anxious participant who may deny that he or she is anxious and attribute poor performance to inadequate preparation. With the interviews being semi-structured, some impromptu questions could catch some participants off guard and therefore limit the quality of their response. Self-reported data are seen to be of less valued to the various other forms of theoretical perspectives. In addition, Heppner, Wampold and Kivlighan write, "self-reports tend to be of minimal importance to staunch behaviorist" (p.335). Therefore, while other may believe that information gathered from self-reported data to be rich, others may beg to differ based upon the limitations listed above. On the other hand, Robins, Fraley, and Kruger (2007) states that, "An overarching issue is the credibility of self-reports... Other powerful motives are consistency seeking, self-enhancement, and self-presentation" (p.228). Overall, even if participants are trying their best to recollect things that have occurred in the past, the reports they give are still subject to a plethora of inaccuracy. By being aware of the limitations that occur in qualitative research, the

researcher is also aware of the things that could diminish the trustworthiness of qualitative data.

Institutional Recommendations

1. Many scholars have discuss the important role that mentoring plays in the lives of African American men at PWis (Green & Scott, 2003; Kincey, 2007; Chambers, 2011). The institution should employ more African American faculty and staff with emphasis put on mentoring. By promoting job openings on the campuses of Historically Black Colleges and Universities and job search engines websites which target minority candidates, the university will have a more diverse applicant pool to select from. Mentoring should be placed in the entire job descriptions posted. Mentorship training should be presented as a part of new staff orientation. If the university requires assistance on how to properly mentor African American men, it should seek the expertise of Black male mentoring programs such as 100 Black Men of American, INC.
(<http://www.100blackmen.org/mentoring.aspx>) or The Black Star Project
(http://blackstarproject.org/action/index.php?option=com_content&view=category&layout=blog&id=4&Itemid=28).
2. It is very important that a considerable amount of diversity training take place at PWis (Pope, Reynolds and Mueller, 2004; Feldman, 2005). The institution should implement more in-depth diversity training for current faculty and staff. This training should not only include lecture sessions on how to interact with a diverse student population. Diversity training should include intense case study projects as well as a fishbowl/focus groups with minority students who attend the

institution. This will equip faculty and staff with the information needed to work with the minority student body at this institution.

3. It is important that African American students have social outlets at PWIs (Terrell and Strayhorn, 2012). Since social outlets for African Americans are limited in the community in which the university is located, the university should implement more programs and resources for the African American student body. Things such as concerts, comedy shows, and culturally relevant lectures should be presented to African American students on a consistent basis and not just during particular weekends.
4. The Multicultural Center (The Black House) should be renovated and presented as a historical landmark for African American students. While funds may hinder this from taking place, I suggest that the institution allow African American fraternities, sororities and student groups to assist in the renovation of the property by donating items to The Multicultural Center. Items such as furniture, electronics, books, and computers can be donated in the name of that organization. This will instill a sense of pride in The Multicultural Center amongst the African American student body. In the spirit of collaboration the university should attempt to match the efforts of the contributing student groups to renovate The Multicultural center for consistent use.
5. The university could coordinate campus unity events such as: concerts, open mics, and game nights to combat racism on campus. By structuring programs to appeal to the university's student demographics, students will come together more

often and possibly build relationships with individuals from different sub groups on campus (Gardner, Jewler, and Barefoot, 2010).

6. Minority student groups on campus could co-sponsor events with predominantly white student groups and organizations to build a sense of unity amongst the student body.
7. It is good to be visible in the community where the university is located (Evans, 2009). With that being said, Minority student organizations could venture out into the community and do service work such as: reading to younger students, volunteering at retirement homes, and helping with other community based projects.
8. Open dialog sessions could be organized to discuss issues pertaining to minorities and their relationship with the town where the university is located.

Recommendations for Student Affairs Practitioners

1. Establishing a connection with other student affairs professional at the university to create more social outlets for African Americans (Castellanos and Lee, 2003).
The social outlets could consist of: Basketball tournaments, video game tournaments, culturally relevant concerts, and Saturday morning barbershop for African American males.
2. Create workshops and presentations on how to connect and accommodate African American male students at predominantly White campuses.
3. Actively recruit African American males for student affairs professional's positions. These individuals can be significant in the success of African American males on campus (Gardner, 2008).

Recommendations for Future Research

1. Further research could be done regarding the African American female experience on the campus of Eastern Illinois University. Researching the African American female experience will serve as a companion to the research conducted to uncover the African American male experience at Eastern Illinois University . Collectively these two documents could serve as a history of African American at Eastern Illinois University.
2. A more in-depth look at each theme regarding the African American male experience at Eastern Illinois University. While I was unable to successfully include more participants into this particular study, more participants would strengthen the findings.
3. Compare the experience of African American males at another campus similar to Eastern Illinois University to see if any of the participants experience correlate with one another.

Conclusion

The experiences of the African American male at Eastern Illinois University have been presented in this study. From this research I have found that oneliness, lowered expectations, student organizations, and mentors are all factors that influence the experience of African American men on this campus. From this study, one can follow how the experiences of African American males have changed throughout time. Although decades separate the participants, trends of racism and discrimination can be found throughout every interview. This study has made it apparent that we as black men have yet to truly earn our sit in society. One may conclude that to be ridiculous since we have

a Black president, however, we having a Black president has not filtered the hearts and minds of those who subscribe to racist ideologies.

On the other hand, African American men must not use institutionalized racism as a crutch which forces them into mediocrity. We must remain diligent in our quest for the "American Dream". One of the myriad of things that the leaders and participants of the civil rights movement has taught is that we cannot give in or give out to the racism that still plagues our country. As African American men who attend PWI, it is crucial that we realize that we are our brothers keeper, we are family. The Swahili term "Ubutu" encompasses this concept. Nelson and Lundin (2010) explain that Ubuntu is an African philosophy meaning that we are all one family. I am because we are. We as black men at PWIs need to adopt this philosophy and apply it to the way we interact with one another. Until society changes I feel like this is the only way to survive.

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APPENDIX A

Inform Consent

CONSENT TO PARTICIPATE IN RESEARCH

Evolvement & Involvement: Five Decades of the African American Male Collegiate Experience on a Midwestern College Campus.

You are invited to participate in a research study conducted by Rovion Reed, from the Department of Counseling and Student Development at Eastern Illinois University. Your participation in this study is entirely voluntary. Please ask questions about anything you do not understand, before deciding whether or not to participate

• PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

The purpose of this study is to examine the African American male experience on the campus of Eastern Illinois University over the last five decades from an ecological systems perspective to discover what are if any the social trends that may have occurred within that group. Findings from this study may also serve as a tool for the university's administrators, faculty and staff to increase sensitivity and awareness when interacting with African American male college students. Finally, this study will also serve as a documentation of the history of how African American men on Eastern Illinois University experience the campus. The research will consist of archival documents and the personal accounts of African American male college students who attended Eastern Illinois University over the last five decades. Data collection will occur during individual interviews and a focus group consisting of all of the participants.

• PROCEDURES

If you volunteer to participate in this study, you will be asked to:

You will be asked to answer a series of questions that pertain to their lived experiences as African American men on the campus of Eastern Illinois University. You will be asked to answer the questions as thoroughly as possible. Interviews will be videotaped. The video footage will be used to better analyze the evolvement & involvement of African American men at Eastern Illinois University over the last five decades.

• POTENTIAL RISKS AND DISCOMFORTS

There are no foreseeable risks of discomforts associated with this study

• POTENTIAL BENEFITS TO SUBJECTS AND/OR TO SOCIETY

This study will present no direct benefit for you. You will get a sense of importance because they are serving as a hub of information on their specific era. There are also some general benefits as

well. The research will provide the university with a body of knowledge on the experience of African American men as students at this university.

- **INCENTIVES FOR PARTICIPATION**

Upon completion of the interviews and focus group you will receive a \$20.00 gift card from the restaurant of their choice.

- **CONFIDENTIALITY**

Any information that is obtained in connection with this study and that can be identified with you will remain confidential and will be disclosed only with your permission or as required by law. Data (notes/video) will be stored in the home of the researcher in a lock file cabinet for the duration of the research. Only the researcher and the thesis advisor will have access to the data. If you decide to withdraw from the study, all data pertaining to them will be completely erased from the study. Upon the completion of the research, data will be stored in a lock file cabinet of the researcher's home for three years and then destroyed.

- **PARTICIPATION AND WITHDRAWAL**

Your participation in this research study is voluntary and not a requirement or a condition for being the recipient of benefits or services from Eastern Illinois University or any other organization sponsoring the research project. If you volunteer to be in this study, you may withdraw at any time without consequences of any kind or loss of benefits or services to which you are otherwise entitled.

There is no penalty if you withdraw from the study and you will not lose any benefits to which you are otherwise entitled.

- **IDENTIFICATION OF INVESTIGATORS**

If you have any questions or concerns about this research, please contact:

Rovion Reed (principle investigator)
(217) 512-9061
rdreed@eiu.edu

Catherine Polydore (faculty sponsor)
(217) 581-7237
cpolydore@m.eiu.edu

- **RIGHTS OF RESEARCH SUBJECTS**

If you have any questions or concerns about the treatment of human participants in this study, you may call or write:

Institutional Review Board
Eastern Illinois University
600 Lincoln Ave.
Charleston, IL 61920
Telephone: (217) 581-8576
E-mail: eiuirb@www.eiu.edu

You will be given the opportunity to discuss any questions about your rights as a research subject with a member of the IRB. The IRB is an independent committee composed of members of the University community, as well as lay members of the community not connected with EIU. The IRB has reviewed and approved this study.

I voluntarily agree to participate in this study. I understand that I am free to withdraw my consent and discontinue my participation at any time. I have been given a copy of this form.

Printed Name of Participant

Signature of Participant

Date

APPENDIXB

Interview Protocol

Interview Questions

All participants:

First, thank you so much for your participation in this study. As a reminder, your participation is completely voluntary and you may withdraw at any time. Information gathered will be confidential.

Participant from 1950s/1960s:

1. How do you identify yourself racially?
2. I am trying to get some understanding of your experiences here at EIU. Can you tell a little more about it? Was it generally positive, negative or neutral?
3. Describe how school integration impacted your experience at the university?
4. Were you involved in any organizations and/or athletic sports?
5. Why or why weren't you involved?
6. How did Black Greek Letter Organizations impact your experience at the university?
7. Describe how the assassinations of Dr. Martin Luther King and Malcolm X impacted your experience at the university?
8. How did the Civil Rights and Black Power Movements impact your experience at the university?
9. Describe your interactions with individuals of a different race than yours?
10. What impact if any did the Black Student Union impact your experience at the university?
11. How did your stay at the university impact you past your leaving the university?

Participants from 1970s:

1. How do you identify yourself racially?
2. I am trying to get some understanding of your experiences here at EIU. Can you tell a little more about it? Was it generally positive, negative or neutral?
3. Were you involved in any organizations and/or athletic sports?
4. Why or why weren't you involved?
5. How did Black Greek Letter Organizations impact your experience at the university?
6. Describe your interactions with individuals of a different race than yours?
7. How did the events that occurred at Kent State impact your experience at the university?
8. How did Vietnam War impact your experience at the university?
9. How did affirmative action impact your experience at the university?
10. Describe your interactions with individuals of a different race than yours?
11. What impact if any did the Black Student Union impact your experience at the university?

Participants from 1980s:

1. How do you identify yourself racially?
2. I am trying to get some understanding of your experiences here at EIU. Can you tell a little more about it? Was it generally positive, negative or neutral?
3. Were you involved in any organizations and/or athletic sports?
4. Why or why weren't you involved?
5. How did Black Greek Letter Organizations impact your experience at the university?

6. What impact if any did the Black Student Union impact your experience at the university?
7. Describe your interactions with individuals of a different race than yours?
8. How much of an impact did Hip Hop/rap music have on your experience at the university?
9. How did Jesse Jackson's candidacy impact your experience at the university?

Participants from the 1990s:

1. How do you identify yourself racially?
2. I am trying to get some understanding of your experiences here at EIU. Can you tell a little more about it? Was it generally positive, negative or neutral?
3. Were you involved in any organizations and/or athletic sports?
4. Why or why weren't you involved?
5. How did Black Greek Letter Organizations impact your experience at the university?
6. Describe your interactions with individuals of a different race than yours?
7. What impact if any did the Black Student Union have on your experience at the university?
8. How did the public beating of Rodney King impact your experience at the university?
9. How did gang culture impact your experience at the university?

Participants from the 2000s/2010s

1. How do you identify yourself racially?
2. I am trying to get some understanding of your experiences here at EIU. Can you tell a little more about it? Was it generally positive, negative or neutral?
3. Were you involved in any organizations and/or athletic sports?
4. Why or why weren't you involved?
5. How did Black Greek Letter Organizations impact your experience at the university?
6. Describe your interactions with individuals of a different race than yours?
7. Describe how the events that occurred on 9/11 impacts/impacted your experience at the university?
8. Describe how has the election of President Barak H. Obama impacts/impacted your experience at the university?
9. Describe how the state of the economy impacts/impacted your experience at the university.